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# ZILLAH;

A TALE OF

## THE HOLY CITY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“BRAMBLETYE HOUSE,” “THE TOR HILL,”

“REUBEN APSLEY,” &c.

*Horace Smith*

“From thee and thy innocent beauty first came  
The revealings that taught him true love to adore,  
To feel the bright presence, and turn him with shame  
From the idols he darkly had knelt to before.”

T. MOORE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1828.

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# Z I L L A H.

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## CHAPTER I.

FORTUNATELY for Gabriel, who volunteered to act as caterer for the party, he procured lodgings at a good inn, and lampreys were abundant ; so that by the assistance of these and other delicacies, he was enabled to furnish forth a dinner, which he maintained to be worthy of the Tax-collector's table at Jerusalem ; although he fully admitted the refined taste of that wealthy and unpopular personage, who had been the first to introduce several culinary luxuries from Rome.

Refreshed by her repast, and still more by the use of the bath, to which they had all had recourse upon their arrival, Zillah urged her friends to accompany her to the shore, as she was impatient to become a close spectator of the great sea, which she had hitherto only beheld from the heights. They accordingly sallied forth for this purpose, and descending the steep declivity that led down to the harbour, presently found themselves surrounded with the numerous labourers, who, with the assistance of their huge elephants, and not less bulky machines, were dragging and lowering the immense blocks for enlarging the mole, some of which she had already encountered in the streets.\* In the haven were riding vessels of all sorts, those employed in trade being easily distinguished by their great bulk, while the gilt and sculptured prows, or gaily canopied decks of the smaller ones, sufficiently indicated that they were pleasure-boats belong-

\* The remains of this work are still to be seen.

ing to some of the wealthy merchants. From the top of almost every mast brilliant streamers floated in the air, the decks were crowded with sailors and rowers of all nations, whose bright-coloured dresses, as well as the whole picture of the harbour and its surrounding buildings, were reflected in the calm pellucid waters beneath. The sounds, however, that reached her ear were by no means in unison with the tranquillity of the sea ; for in one quarter a party of rowers were wrangling in a harsh language which she could not comprehend ; while the creaking of pullies, the heavy roll of ponderous machines, the sharp cry of the elephants goaded to the performance of their tasks, together with the braying of the numerous asses and mules employed in unloading the merchantmen along the quay, formed a dissonant concert, from which she was anxious to make her escape. Novel and animated as was the scene, she felt that it derogated from the grandeur and sanc-

tity of nature. Anxious to contemplate the great sea, divested of human association, she walked along the coast, gradually receding from the habitations of men, until her soul was overwhelmed with the magnificence of the ocean in all its lonely sublimity, its intensely deep blue waters heaving gently over their rocky bottom, and their thin glassy surfaces assuming a yellow hue, as they stretched themselves, as if in luxurious indolence, over the sands. Her heart was too full for speech, and her thoughts, like the distant line of the horizon upon which she was gazing, were lost in the union of heaven and the great waters.

Scarcely less deeply affected than his daughter, for he had never seen the sea before, the Sagan walked beside her, his right arm crossed in the foldings of his cloak, his left hand clasping his long-bearded chin, and his bushy brows brought down to protect his eyes, as he gazed with an expression of awe-stricken reverence

upon the watery expanse before him. Upon Gabriel, to whom the scene was perfectly familiar, its effect was in a great degree lost. The ocean itself excited his admiration and curiosity much less keenly than the vessels sailing or rowing upon its bosom. With these he appeared to be well conversant, easily determining the nation to which they belonged from the mode of their construction, or the figures painted on their sails, and surmising even the merchandise with which they were probably laden, and the ports to which they were bound.

Our travellers remained one day longer at Joppa, in order that Zillah might be completely recruited before she encountered a new species of fatigue, when they embarked on board a vessel, belonging to a Hebrew merchant, in which Gabriel had secured them a passage, and which was furnished with better accommodations, from its larger size, than the generality of ships, as they were then constructed. As Zillah stood



upon the deck, and contemplated the shores of her native land, to which she was now about to bid adieu, uncertain when she should revisit them, the regret of separation seemed to be aggravated by the beauty of the prospect upon which she was gazing, as well as by the contrast of her own mournful feelings with the cheerful brilliancy of nature. The dark blue firmament was painted here and there with masses of the most gorgeous clouds, checquering the surface of the ocean by alternate streaks of shadow and light, which, while they threw back the distance far, far away, till the lips of the sea and sky met each other, variegated the intervening space with every diversity of rich tint. Patches of straw-colour, where the waters flowed over the yellow sands, lines of deep empurpled shade, of bright blue, of rich sparkling molten gold, and of pale greenish violet, succeeded each other, and melted softly away into the horizon.

When the oars were rested in some calm sunny spot, she looked down with awe and admiration into the vast translucent halls and saloons of the deep, their floors tessellated with coloured rocks, or carpeted with sea-weed, the vault of heaven their painted ceiling, and herself flying between both, as if the winged bark that bore her were some prodigious bird. The propitious breeze wafted perfume upon its wings from the plain of Sharon; and along the coast as far as Janina, the waters were fringed with a white line of froth, broken here and there by clumps of palms and other trees, growing even to the edge of the waves. The sea view, too, was animated with moving objects; for numerous vessels, availing themselves of the favourable wind, were leaving the port of Joppa, their figured sails, painted sides, and many glittering oars, now sparkling in the bright ray, and now presenting their shaded outlines, as they bent

their course in different directions.—“ Well do these men of Joppa,” said the Sagan, “ prove themselves to be of the tribe of Zebulon, of whom it was foretold that they should suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand.”

“ And literally has the prediction been accomplished,” added Gabriel ; “ for they have not only enriched themselves by their fisheries and commerce, but by their glass-manufactories, of which sand is the principal ingredient.”

“ What is yonder low-built vessel ?” enquired the Sagan, “ whose swarthy and half naked rowers wear a tuft of hair upon the chin, and strike their oars to the dissonant measures of some barbarian song ?”

“ By the Crocodile painted on the sail, and the figure of Serapis at her head, it is doubtless an Egyptian ship, bound probably for the Nile, with luxuries for some of the towns and temples upon its banks.”

“ And of what nation is this larger vessel now coming towards us, with two male figures projecting from its bows?”

“ Those are the Dioscuri, the twin brothers Castor and Pollux,—a sign which the Roman sailors ever deem of happy augury ; from which, as well as from the long hair and beardless chins of the rowers, I suspect that their vessel is bound for the Tiber. That which follows her is a Bæotian, from the rude figure of Cadmus at its head, grasping a dragon ; and behind her, with the knot of handsome and gracefully-dressed young men upon the deck, is an Athenian, known by the Owl upon the flag, and the well-sculptured figure of Minerva, their tutelary protectress, at the bows. The merchantships of the heathen may be sometimes distinguished by a Mercury, extending his wings over their cut-water ; their galleys of war, by a Mars ; and their pleasure-boats, by a Venus or a Cupid.”

“ But what have we yonder,” resumed the Sagan, “ ploughing her majestic way through the foaming waves with a speed that promises soon to eclipse our humble bark, and indeed every other that moves around her ?”

“ By the number and the flashing of her gilded oars, this must indeed be some stately Queen of the Sea ; but until she come nearer to us, I cannot pronounce to what nation she belongs.”

From the rapidity of her advance, the vessel in question was not long in approaching them ; and as she drew near, all eyes were fixed upon the floating pageant in mute admiration. Her head was carved into the resemblance of a bridling swan, around whose breast, as it proudly stemmed the water, the foaming waves might well be mistaken for its snowy plumage, ruffled by the wind. The body of the ship was decorated with the richest carvings, painting, and gilding ; the seats for the rowers were of ivory ;

the oars were inlaid with the same material, and gilt from the handle to the water ; the purple sails were decorated with a painting of Venus rising from the sea, and the gilt streamer at the mast-head floated in the air like a flaming meteor. Upon the deck, under a canopy of purple and white silk, a splendidly-attired young man was seen reclining upon a couch, and holding a sparkling goblet in his hand. A band of musicians was stationed behind him, to beguile the tediousness of slower motion with the soft melody of flutes and other wind instruments, whenever the rowers rested upon their oars ; and a large silver censer, filled with the most odoriferous perfumes, was so placed as that its fragrant fumes might be always wafted towards him by the breeze.

“ What nobleman or youthful prince is this ? ” enquired Zillah, — “ who does not even condescend to cast a glance around him as he sails along in such triumphant state ? ”

“ I recognise him now,” replied Gabriel—  
“ it is Heliodorus, the young merchant of Tyre, who has lately succeeded to an immense fortune upon the death of his father ; and, having joined the heathen sect of the Epicureans, is lavishing his wealth in every costly and luxurious enjoyment that he can devise. He has, doubtless, male and female companions in the cabins, who will assist him in his object of making the enjoyments of life atone for its brevity.”

“ For whose use,” enquired the Sagan, “ is that splendid throne upon the stern of the vessel, formed of carved ivory and embossed silver ornaments?—and what is the exquisitely sculptured figure that I see installed within it ?”

“ That is the Tutela, or shrine of the vessel ; and the figure is the Venus of the Sea, the Succoth Benoth, the daughter of Assyria, to which this lewd idolater and his heathen



fellow-worshippers doubtless pay their adorations."

"Idiots! beasts! dogs! swine!" ejaculated the Sagan, with an expression of mingled rage and horror—"is it thus they evince their gratitude to Heaven for the blessings they have received?—why do not the waves open and swallow up this impious crew, who, while they tempt the dangers and behold the wonders of the great deep, are besotted enough to look for protection from the ivory image of a lascivious wanton?"

"Because He who rules the waves has fortunately more compassion for us, and for our follies, than we have for one another," replied Gabriel.—"Harkye, Rab Malachi! you must accustom yourself to these sights, and learn to bear them with indifference, or, at least, to conceal your aversion; for we are going where you will see nothing else, and where the smallest manifestation of dislike

might probably compromise your safety, and would infallibly ensure the failure of your mission."

"Recollect too, my dear father," added Zillah, "that if the best things abused become the worst, this unfortunate young Epicurean may be safely left to the curse of his own wealth."

The Sagan, however, would not be appeased: his beard bristled up as he inflated his reddened cheeks, or muttered execrations between his teeth; and his wrath seemed even to be aggravated to an ecstasy when the Tyrian vessel rested upon her oars, and the music of wind-instruments floated mellifluously over the surface of the waters. "Simon, Simon!" he impatiently cried out, "fetch me instantly the Holy Volume. If we can hear their accursed flutes, they may perchance catch the sound of my voice as I recite to them the ruin, and the desolation, and the judgment of God that

shall overwhelm their proud and idolatrous city, as it is foretold by the blessed Ezekiel." Taking the book, and raising his voice to its topmost pitch, he shouted out the twenty seventh chapter of the prophet ; his menacing tones, looks, and gestures, together with the solemn and awful denunciations he was ejaculating, offering a strange contrast to the soft-floating melody of the musicians, and the stately progress of the voluptuous vessel as she was gently wafted onwards by the wind ; while her Epicurean owner retained his recumbent posture, either not hearing, or not heeding, the visitation with which Tyre and her merchants were threatened.

This prediction, however, was even then in the course of its fulfilment ; for, although many individuals of great wealth and luxury still dwelt in Tyre, she had already lost a considerable portion of that incalculably profitable commerce between India and Europe, which

being first discovered or enlarged by Solomon when he traded to Tarshish and Ophir, and having successively enriched the inland towns of Bagdad and Palmyra, and the sea-ports of Tyre, Sidon, and Alexandria, was destined at a later period to elevate the little Republic of Venice into a powerful State, and to be finally lost to all the dwellers upon the Mediterranean shores by the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope. Had the Tyrian even heard the warning voice that was sent after him athwart the waters,—had he listened to the assurance that his magnificent island city, in spite of its enclosing walls of a hundred and fifty feet high, and its princely merchants with their wealth and their navies, should become, as it is now, a mere heap of ruins, inhabited by a few wretched fishermen, he would probably have only smiled in derision, or have gazed in pity upon the prophecier of such incredible reveries, as a crazy enthusiast.

Scarcely had the Sagan closed the volume, when the rowers of the vessel he had been apostrophizing resumed their oars, the breeze freshened, their different course bore them rapidly away, and he at length recovered his composure, and began to discourse complacently about the new objects that excited his attention. From the great commerce then carrying on across the eastern part of the Mediterranean in numerous small vessels, there were generally several sail in sight, respecting which Gabriel was in most instances enabled to furnish information ; but as the evening closed, they gradually receded from sight : by the time the sun's large and crimsoned disk had sunk majestically beneath the waters, irradiating them with its golden effulgence, not a ship was to be seen ; and the Sagan and his daughter, for the first time in their lives, found themselves enclosed on all sides by the glorious vault of heaven, reposing upon the circling horizon of the wide sea, as if their little bark

were the sole tenant of the world in which it moved.

The remainder of their voyage being accomplished without accident or inconvenience to any of the party, they arrived in due time off the harbour of Brundisium, which was usually the medium of communication between Rome and the eastern ports of the Mediterranean, although it still left a land journey of some length to be performed. This however being along the Appian way, which led direct to the capital, travellers were sure of a good road and abundant accommodation during the whole of their route. On approaching the outer entrance, it was seen that all the interior ports, which formed so many little gulfs amid the rocks, were crowded with shipping, and the captain expressed his opinion that some extraordinary armament must be preparing, as he had never before witnessed such an accumulation of vessels in the place. No sooner had they entered the exterior

haven, than numerous small boats surrounded them, eagerly contending with one another for the advantage of putting them ashore, although the charge for this service was limited to a penny for each person. Trifling as was the object, the two parties, consisting of slaves employed for that purpose by some of the ship-owners, and the regular boatmen of the place, struggled for it with such eagerness, that after bespattering one another with language which Zillah, fortunately for herself, could not comprehend, some of the parties began to attack each other with their oars. Happy to escape from this scene of vulgar uproar, the Sagan and his companions stepped into one of the boats, not however without several muttered sarcasms from the former upon the fierce barbarism of these Romans, the self-styled masters of the world. He had the good sense to use the Hebrew language, or their rowers, slaves as they were, might have felt their dignity aggrieved, and have resorted



to a retaliation which their coarse ferocity would have probably rendered no very pleasant specimen of Brundusian manners. Even without this provocation, the strange appearance and foreign language of their fare became the subjects of their gross pleasantry, as they joked with one another, or winked at the brother boatmen who passed them ; so that Zillah was not a little delighted when she set foot upon the *terra firma* of Italy, and bade adieu to an element which does not appear in any age of the world to have imparted much refinement to those whom it supports.

Gabriel, who had previously visited Brundisium, conducted his companions to an inn situated upon the quay of the principal harbour, and only a few paces distant from the spot where they landed. Here, while they were seated at the window, gazing upon the busy scene of the thickly-peopled wharf, and the numerous vessels moored to its sides, or anchored at a little dis-

tance, they heard the sound of martial music, and presently saw a detachment of foot-soldiers approaching, headed by a handsome young man in armour, mounted on a richly caparisoned horse. The Sagan started back at the sight, for he instantly recognised him to be Herod the Tetrarch, as he was still called by the partisans of Antigonus; though, since the decree of the Roman Senate, he had assumed to himself the title of King of Judæa. No personal repugnance, however, instigated the Sagan; for, associated as is the name of Herod the Great in our memories with his massacre of the Innocents, and all the horrors and enormities of his later life, he was at this period not only unstained by any imputation of cruelty, but had even acquired a reputation for the generosity and mercy, as well as the martial skill and prowess which constitute the character of a true hero; while the graces of his person and the courtesy of his manner won him “golden opinions from all sorts of men.”

As the Sagan had nevertheless manifold and most potent reasons for not wishing to be discovered, he drew Zillah hastily from the window ; and, on making enquiry of the landlord of the inn, he learned for the first time, that Herod had been appointed King of Judæa by the Senate ; and that, having immediately afterwards sailed for Ptolemais in Galilee, he had not only made arrangements with his partisans for prosecuting the war against Antigonus, but, returning with his customary activity to Brundusium, had raised a subsidiary force, and collected the armament then lying in the ports, for the purpose of transporting his mercenaries into Palestine, and of winning and wearing by force the crown of which he had procured a grant by bribery.

## CHAPTER II.

OUR travellers immediately sate in consultation as to the most advisable course to be followed after the receipt of this intelligence. Although the Sagan was of opinion that it was now too late to expect any success in the main object of their embassy, he was by no means sorry that he had undertaken it, for all his forebodings seemed about to be speedily realized. Palestine would soon become the seat of a civil war; Jerusalem would again be exposed to the horrors of a siege, which would probably terminate in its capture by assault, and the indiscriminate massacre of a great portion of its inha-

bitants. Such being the prospect of its fate, he rejoiced that he had removed his daughter from the threatened scene of misery and slaughter, and was confirmed in his resolution of leaving her with his kinsman at Rome, until the convulsions with which her native country was distracted should have subsided into peace.

Gabriel was very far from despairing of ultimate success in their negotiation, although Herod had thus got the start of them with the Roman government. From his knowledge of Antony's character, he inferred that a higher bribe, especially if offered in the form of jewels and baubles, would easily win him to undo what he had done ; a new decree might be obtained from the servility of the Senate, by feeing some of their most eloquent members, who were generally the most corrupt, to represent that, as Antigonus was in possession of the almost impregnable fortress of Jerusalem, and quietly acknowledged as King by the whole

country, it would be no easy task to dispossess him ; while it would be highly impolitic to convert into a desperate enemy one who was both able and willing to assist them, if he were previously recognized as king of Judæa. Neither of the claimants could urge an absolute right to the crown ; for Hircanus, the legitimate monarch, was still living, although in distant captivity ; and in a question of expediency and good policy between Herod, a fugitive and an adventurer, and Antigonus in possession of all the fortresses and at the head of an army, the Senate would naturally be disposed to side with the latter, when the advantages of such a measure were fairly placed before them. Antony never wanted arguments to enforce his own wishes, and as to their securing him as their advocate, and a zealous one too, when once he had seen the retaining fee which they were prepared to offer him, Gabriel would not allow a moment's doubt to be entertained. “ What ! ” he exclaimed,

“have I not the oriental pearls which I bought from Hatem ben Almalec the Idumæan, and which blush like the cheek of a Nazarite; and the large sardonyx, pellucid as crystal, which I got in exchange from Josa Jochanan of Babylon; and the diamond ring, once worn by Mithridates, King of Pontus, who was wont to boast that he carried the morning star upon his finger; and the green topaz found in the tomb at Engedi, wherein, as it is said, David and Saul were buried; and the green and gold chrysoprasus which Rab Joshua ben Levi—”

“Enough, enough !” interposed the Sagan—  
“if jewels can win a man, Antony is our own; and if they fail, it will not, at all events, be for want of an able historian and eulogist to trace their pedigree and emblazon their merits. Spare your eloquence for the present, since we are both agreed as to the propriety of proceeding to Rome; and prithee make instant enquiry how we may most speedily be conveyed thither,



for there is not a moment to be lost. Let us at least try the effect of our bribe; for, as the King himself reminded me at parting, he will not need these baubles, whether he be deposed, or confirmed in his sovereignty.”

As Gabriel was not personally known to Herod, it was agreed that he should sally forth into the town to make such enquiries and observations as might advance their object, while his fellow-travellers immured themselves in the inn. Betaking himself with this intention to the Forum, which was always the lounging-place of all idlers and newsmongers, he quickly gathered full information, not only respecting the amount of Herod's armament, but also as to the best means of their own safe and speedy conveyance to Rome. Having ascertained this most essential point, his curiosity led him to wander for some time about the town, when his ramble brought him to the front of an ancient temple of the Doric order, situated at the bottom of a

lone and apparently deserted street, for he saw no passengers. Rendered too much of a Cosmopolitan by his travels to share his kinsman's unmeasured horror of the religious structures of the heathen, he rather contemplated them with a mixed feeling of admiration at their architectural beauties, and contempt for the purposes to which they were applied. He knew that at times it was forbidden to enter these sanctuaries, and that to foreigners like himself it might be even dangerous to make the attempt ; but, being of an inquisitive and prying disposition, he resolved, as he seemed to be quite unobserved, to try the door of the building before him, and just take a peep at the interior. The portal yielded to his pressure ; he entered without noise, and again gently closed it in such a manner as that he could immediately make his escape if necessary. The scene presented to his view, from the corner in which he instantly ensconced himself, abundantly gratified his cu-

riosity, although at first it somewhat puzzled his apprehensions. It was a temple erected to Venus Verticordia, or the converter of hearts, to beseech her interference for preventing the gross abuses committed in her name; in which respect it seems that the inhabitants of Brundisium had as much need of a reform as their fellow-countrymen of Rome. This was the anniversary day when the statue of the goddess was to be invested in new habiliments; for which purpose, as well as for presenting at her shrine the offerings of their townswomen, twelve matrons of the most unblemished reputation were selected; and it would have disturbed the serenity of Gabriel's observations, had he been aware that it was an offence of the deepest die for any man, and an inextinguishable crime for a foreigner and a barbarian, to violate the privacy of their devotions.

Ignorant of the deep penalty he was incurring, and trusting to the obscure corner of the vesti-

bule into which he had crept, he looked with intense curiosity through the opening before him into the main body of the building, which was a low, massive structure, divided into a wide centre and two lateral aisles of narrower dimensions by a range of solid Doric columns on either side. The light of day had been carefully excluded, its place being supplied by richly decorated lamps hanging from the centre of the ceiling, or supported by lofty candelabra in the side-aisles. Numerous as they were, the atmosphere was so surcharged with the fragrant fumes of censers, that their flames, seeming to faint with sweet odours, threw a dim religious light upon the statues placed between the columns on either side, all of which bore reference to the history of Venus, and seemed by their beauty and symmetry to be the works of the most distinguished Grecian artists. As some of these, in their various animated attitudes, received the dubious rays of the lamps, or were indistinctly

seen in the shade, Gabriel could hardly divest himself of the impression that they were the living guardians of the place, and would step down from their pedestals to chastise any intrusion upon their sanctuary.

But his attention was soon withdrawn from these subordinate figures to the statue of the goddess herself, placed within a magnificent shrine at the farther extremity of the building. It was in a sitting posture, and of such gigantic proportions, that he could not suppress a smile as he reflected that, if she were to stand up, her head would inevitably carry away the roof of the building. Probably, however, the architect and the sculptor might have reminded him that there was an emblematic meaning in this apparent disproportion, which was intended to show that, although the image of the deity may enter our souls, which are its living temples, it cannot be contained in them to its full extent. As the goddess was now disrobed of all her vestments,

he was enabled to observe the exquisite proportions and beautiful majesty of the statue, which was reputed to be the workmanship of Phidias. His admiration, however, of this inanimate wonder yielded to his curiosity, as he noticed the strange movements of the living beings that surrounded her. Behind a long, low altar, at a little distance, were seated several females, who appeared to be priestesses, taking an account of the offerings heaped up before them, which consisted of the most costly articles of female dress and decoration. These they occasionally held up, as if for the inspection and gratification of the goddess; and then kissing their hands, they waved them towards her in the act of worship. On one table beside them were lying the habiliments recently taken from the statue; upon another, the new ones in which she was about to be attired; but the re-investment was not to begin until after certain preliminary ceremonies which the twelve matrons were now in the very act

of performing,—all, however, standing at a respectful distance, and going through their pantomimic services in profound silence, and with every expression upon their countenances of the most reverent homage. One passed a comb repeatedly through the air at a yard's distance, as if employed in adjusting the tresses of the goddess; another presented water in a silver laver, that she might wash her hands; a third tendered the same offices to her feet; a fourth proffered her a toothbrush; a fifth stretched forth a box of perfumes and cosmetics with one hand, and held a looking-glass before her with the other; while the remainder were equally assiduous in officiating as her handmaids, and urging upon her acceptance all the various articles of the female toilet; none, however, approaching near enough to touch the object of their adoration. The silence, the solemnity, the awe-stricken looks and demeanour of the ministrants, offered such a contrast to the preposterous



absurdity of their proceedings ; the whole had so much the air of a dozen grown-up children toying with a huge doll, that Gabriel, after several efforts to suppress his risibility, was compelled to indulge himself in a titter, which proved to be somewhat louder than he had intended. Winning its way through the profound silence to the ears of the matrons, they instantly turned their eyes in the direction of the irreverent sound ; and catching a glimpse of the offender's beard, before he had time to draw back his head, they became aware that the privacy of their solemnities had been violated by some impious male intruder. Shrieks of wrath and horror, that made the sacred building ring, and seemed to scare the very statues upon their pedestals, attested their indignation at the outrage : but Gabriel waited not to witness their ulterior proceedings ; for, convinced of the imminent peril that threatened him, he started from his hiding-place, opened the door, rushed down the street,

hurried along the most obscure lanes he could find, and never relaxed in his speed till he reached the water of the harbour, when he jumped into a boat, and desired to be rowed to the opposite side of the port.

That there might be the greater difficulty in tracking him, should he be pursued, he made a considerable circuit before he returned to the inn at which he had left his companions ; and as he had repeatedly cautioned the Sagan against irritating the religious feelings of the Pagans, and did not like to confess that he had himself committed the very fault he had been so urgently deprecating, he said not a syllable about his adventure, but contented himself with communicating the intelligence he had gleaned on the subject of Herod's armament. It appeared that the men he had been allowed to enlist in Italy were merely discharged gladiators, superannuated soldiers, deserters, freebooters, and other adventurers and desperadoes, whom the Roman

government were well content to expatriate, and who were not likely to do either credit or service to the cause of their new master. He stated farther, that by a recent edict all persons travelling to or from Rome in any public capacity were authorised to demand a conveyance at the expense of the government, and that, as they were fully entitled to this benefit in their quality of ambassadors, they had only to make application to the Prætor to ensure their safe and speedy arrival at the capital. This he recommended that they should do immediately after dinner, as he had become rather anxious, since the recent untoward occurrence, to turn his back without delay upon the Brundusian worshippers of Venus.

Their meal, however, was not despatched without a fresh misadventure arising from the irritability and intolerance of the Sagan, and which, in conjunction with Gabriel's mishap, formed a most ominous and inauspicious augury of the

vexations they were likely to encounter upon the Roman territory. Our travellers were shown into a room furnished with a semicircular table, and a dinner-couch of the same form, which was then universally used by the Italians instead of chairs. To this custom, which the Sagan considered an absurd innovation at once effeminate and inconvenient for men, and pointedly indecorous for females, he had strenuously opposed himself, when those who affected to imitate the Romans, and the aspirants for the fame of being in the mode, had first introduced the fashion into Jerusalem. He had invariably refused to conform to it when dining out with others; nothing of the sort was of course ever practised in his own house; and, now that he was at an inn, where he considered himself warranted in indulging his own notions upon the subject, he ordered the obnoxious couch to be removed, and chairs to be substituted, with more

pettishness and acrimony of remark than was acceptable to the waiter, who, notwithstanding his servile station, had all the pride and nationality of his countrymen. He concealed his resentment, however, in the hope of the gratuity he should receive at the departure of the guests, until an incident occurred which kindled the embers of mutual wrath into an open and unquenchable flame. Gabriel, who had as usual been the caterer of the repast, was in ecstasies at the superiority of the Roman cookery, even in a remote province, over the most elaborate culinary production of the Jewish metropolis.—“ El Elohim !” he exclaimed—“these Romans beat us in every way ; and one can hardly grudge the empire of the world to men who turn to such savoury account the delicacies which they import from all its four quarters. Strange ! that so delicate and civilized a fish as these small oysters should be brought from so barbarous and frozen an

island as Britain!—Zillah, taste these Tarentine thrushes,—they are delicious; nor is this huge goose's liver, garnished with figs, unworthy your attention, for we have none such in Palestine. What would the poor Idumæans, whom I have sometimes seen feasting upon locusts and carob beans, or mallows sweetened with wild honey,—what would they say to a banquet like this?—Rab Malachi, you do not do justice to my catering. Let me help you to this lamb's paunch stuffed with pistachio nuts,—it is inimitable.”

The Sagan, however, was not in a disposition to be pleased with any thing. Already disconcerted by a dinner-bed having been placed for him instead of a chair, he was annoyed at the thought that he must now habitually deviate from the strict observances of the Law, not by eating forbidden meat, for this he was determined to avoid at all events, but by swallowing that which had not been killed and pre-

pared according to the prescribed forms of the Hebrews. Unaccommodating, and, indeed, bigoted in his notions, he was averse from allowing any sort of superiority to pagans and idolaters, and therefore decried their viands and their mode of cookery with considerable vehemence ; declaring that the beef with saffron sauce, upon which he was then feeding, was a lean, tough, insipid, and inferior meat, not comparable to that which was produced from the pastures of Bashan, the valley of Zeboim, or the plain of Sharen.

As this conversation was carried on in Latin, the waiter, indignant at the slight put upon the produce of his native land, and particularly scandalized that foreigners and barbarians should presume to give themselves such critical airs, flippantly observed, that there could not possibly be finer meat in all the world ; adding in a confidential sort of whisper, as if it were a secret, that his master always procured his beef



from the Priests of the Temple of Jupiter, in the Forum, where none but prime oxen were ever offered in sacrifice.

“What !” ejaculated the Sagan, starting up with a look of profound horror ; “mean you, that this identical meat has been an offering to idols ?”

“It was a sacrifice to Jupiter the Thunderer, the Supreme God.”

“Raca ! Raca !” exclaimed the Sagan, spitting repeatedly upon the ground, with every expression of disgust and abhorrence ; “have I committed the denounced sin ? has the Sagan of the Jews tasted of offerings to Moloch, Belial, and Dagon, when he would rather have eaten the flesh of the unutterable animal itself, or drunk of the cup of Devils ? Thou Mamzer, thou dogs-head, thou viper, asp, adder, cockatrice, and fiery flying serpent ! thou Satan, thou villanous, pagan idolater ! thou shalt suffer for this insult !”—In a transport of ungovern-

able anger, at what he considered a premeditated outrage, he seized his walking-staff, and, springing the concealed dagger at its extremity, was rushing towards the waiter, too much infuriated to know his own purposes, when Zillah and Gabriel, arresting his progress, implored him to be pacified, and to abstain from an act of aggression that might lead to the most alarming consequences.

The waiter himself, not less startled at the sight of the brandished weapon, than surprised at the ebullition of wrath which he had so unintentionally elicited, declared that most travellers considered it the greatest possible treat to feast upon the beef which had been offered to the Supreme God.

“ Hold thy blasphemous tongue !” cried the Sagan, with undiminished passion ; “ upon whom, thou blind and beastly idolater ! darest thou to bestow this sacred name ? Is it upon Jupiter, the dethroner and mutilator of his own

father ; Jupiter, the devourer of his own wife ; Jupiter, the incestuous and the lewd ; Jupiter, the perpetrator of every monstrous enormity ;—is it such a wretch as this that thou wouldst profanely term the supreme governor of the world ? Go to thy marble god, thou groveling ass, and wipe the dust and the filth from off him ; for the bats have perched upon his head, and the owls have defiled his beard, and the vermin have crawled over his body, and he hath neither been able to lift up his hand to drive them away, nor hath his sceptre had power to break through the spider's web that is woven around it, nor hath his thunder found a voice to scare away the toad that hath spit his venom upon the lightning and quenched it. Avaunt ! be-gone, thou accursed pagan, or I will make thee fly with the point of my staff, even wert thou as lame in both thy feet as was Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan !”

It was now the waiter's turn to be horrified

at the audacious impieties to which he had been compelled to listen; but as he stood in awe of the offender,—for, although the Sagan was withheld by his daughter and kinsman, he still grasped his weapon, while his very beard trembled with passion,—he contented himself with casting up his eyes and hands to heaven in utter consternation, and, ejaculating the words — “ O Jupiter omnipotens! O Jupiter fulgurator! O Domini et Dii!” he rushed out of the room.

“ Verily, Rab Malachi,” exclaimed Gabriel, “if there be any truth in the proverb, which saith, ‘ Better is a dry morsel with quietness, than a house full of sacrifices with strife,’—as this, literally, is at present—you would assuredly have acted more wisely to have conformed to the practices of the heathen, than to take anger in the nose at every trifle. We had better return at once to Jerusalem, for among these barbarians you will meet abominations of every sort, and almost at every step.”

“ Would that I had never undertaken this unlucky embassy !” exclaimed the Sagan. “ Raca ! how shall I purify myself from this accursed abomination ? If I could be cleansed of the offence, I would willingly turn my steps homeward, and leave our embassy unaccomplished.”

“ Tush ! with all submission to your Sagan-ship, you talk idly. You must conquer your antipathy to these pagans, and not suffer it to be like that between the sheep and the wolf, which, it is said, exists even after death ; for I have heard, that if the sheep’s intestines be formed into lute-strings, they can never be tuned in unison, or harmony, with a wolf-skin drum. Let us hope that there will be better harmony between the Sagan and the heathen when living, or your intolerant spirit may deeply injure yourself, and still more perilously compromise our dear Zillah.”

“ Say you so, Gabriel ? As the Lord liveth, I would not, for all the treasures of the Temple, put a hair of her head into jeopardy. I am

sorry I yielded to my passion. It is my failing—it is my failing; but henceforth I will control my temper; I will reconcile myself to the abhorred customs of the pagans; I will comply with all your wishes, if so I may the better secure the safety of my child; for never, never did father possess so precious, so dear, so dutiful a daughter!”

“ I did once,” exclaimed Gabriel, fixing his eyes sorrowfully upon the ground, and sighing deeply. A short silence ensued, when he started briskly up, and striking his hands together, cried out, “ Quick, quick! I must be off to the Prætor, to make arrangements for our instant departure, for if this pagan knave of a waiter should blab among his townsmen, that we have taken Jupiter by the beard, and made mockery of his thunder, we shall be seized as foreigners and blasphemers, and incontinently devoted *Diis manibus et diris*.”

“ Speed then, speed, good Gabriel!” said Zillah, “ let not my dear father be placed in

jeopardy, even for an instant. We are all ready for departure, let us be gone this very moment, for fear,——but hark ! hark ! what shouts, and uproar, and clamour of many voices, do I hear in the streets ? Heaven shield my father from all harm !”

“ Be not alarmed, dear Zillah ; these heathens are doubtless celebrating one of their vociferous rites, for scarcely a day passes without a tumultuous and obstreperous procession to some of their innumerable deities.” Going to the window, as if for the purpose of confirming his conjecture, Gabriel beheld a numerous rabblement of people approaching the inn with menacing gestures and vociferations ; and no sooner had they caught sight of him, than the whole crowd, setting up a shout of triumph, rushed forward with increased eagerness and anger. Instantly as he withdrew himself from the window, he was at no loss to comprehend their purpose ; for he had not only recognized



at their head two or three of the matrons whose devotions he had so unwarrantably profaned by his presence, but the waiter who had taken such grievous umbrage at the Sagan's philippic against Jupiter ; and he doubted not that they came to wreak a summary revenge for the double indignity offered to the tutelary deities of their town.

In this supposition he was not mistaken. Some of the exasperated matrons, unable to overtake the violator of their sanctuary, had betaken themselves to the Forum, where they stated the outrage to the authorities and the people collected in the place, a numerous body of whom presently put themselves in motion to discover and punish the offender. Scarcely had they set forward with this intention, when they met the waiter running open-mouthed towards the Temple of Jupiter, which was situated in the Forum, to give information to the priests of the insult that had been offered to their deity.

Upon comparing notes together, it soon became manifest that both offenders belonged to the same party ; and the mob, fired with indignation, quickened their pace towards the inn, gathering, like a snowball, all the scum and refuse of the town as they advanced. As usual, those who had the least religion were the most outrageous against the offenders ; for it is much easier to affect a vociferous zeal for the faith, than to practise a single iota of the duties that it enjoins ; and there are many men who are instantly smitten with a love of devotion, when it affords them an excuse for hating and tormenting their fellow creatures. Every ruffian and ragamuffin, every rogue and vagabond, accordingly, who was made acquainted with the circumstances, felt unutterably scandalized at the insult offered to his august, pure, and immaculate deities ; and the mob was joined in its progress by muleteers, sailors, boatmen, water-carriers, prize-fighters, beggars, slaves,

and other equally enlightened and respectable personages, all most zealous upholders of the established religion in matters of faith, and all most persevering violators of its ordinances in point of practice.

When Gabriel quitted the window, he told his companions that they must prepare for an unpleasant scene of altercation ; confessed the misdemeanour that he had inadvertently committed in the Temple of Venus ; and avowing his readiness to offer himself up as a scapegoat for the whole party, counselled the Sagan to claim protection and freedom from arrest as an ambassador—a character which was always held in respect by the Romans. For his own part, he declared that he felt very little uneasiness, unless upon account of the jewels concealed about his person ; though some of these, perhaps, might be turned to good account as bribes to procure his escape. “ Surely,” he exclaimed, “ if I were to offer the two pale diamonds,

which I bought of Ephraim the Gileadite, to make eyes for the statue of Venus, it would be considered an ample atonement; and as for your offence, I will proffer the pagan rogues a dozen golden Maccabees, to provide fresh gilding for Jupiter's thunderbolts, which I hold to be a liberal proposition. If the god like it not, he may e'en fly to the Indian Tarbhish, upon his own eagle, and seek out a better chapman."

"This is not a moment for pleasantry," said the Sagan, in a reproving tone.

"Truly is it not," replied Gabriel; "and as there would be nothing less pleasant than to lose the scarlet carbuncle which I exchanged for the white sapphires with Jashur of Bethshemeth, it were, perhaps, as well to secrete it in the room, for these idolatrous rogues have ever a keen eye for ferreting out rare jewels."

"Leave the adjustment of this unfortunate

affair to me," said Zillah, "and remain quiet in the chamber. I am a woman. I have incurred no penalty. I will therefore boldly, but respectfully, meet these clamourers, and by stating that you are willing to make compensation to the priests, for the offences inadvertently committed against their deities, as well as by claiming protection for you in your character of ambassadors, I doubt not that the tumult may be allayed." The Sagan was just about to declare that he would not suffer her to expose herself to the smallest risk upon their account, when Simon burst into the room, proclaiming that he had been assailed with stones and vengeful cries by a furious mob, who, as far as he could judge by their gestures, for he thanked God that he knew nothing of their barbarous jargon, were coming with hostile designs against their whole party.

"It is even so," said Zillah, "and we have nothing to do but to submit."

“ Submit !” exclaimed Simon, running to fasten the door, and at the same time drawing his sword : “ Surely, master, you will not consent to such an indignity. Inform them you are the Sagan of Jerusalem—threaten them with the Council—tell them, that if they do not instantly disperse and go home again, every soul of them shall be had up before the Sanhedrim, and soundly trounced. Remind them how the Edomites—”

A rude assault upon the door, and the clamour of many voices, in which nothing could be separately distinguished, put a sudden stop to Simon’s exhortation. Zillah would have gone forward to let in the assailants, but her father, holding her back with his left hand, brandished his steel-pointed rod in his right, determined to protect her from every indignity ; while Simon, with his drawn sword, stood before Gabriel, who was busily employed in dislodging the large carbuncle, and looking around

him for some new hiding-place in which to deposit it.

At the second attack, the door flew open, when the Sagan, advancing a step, and presenting the point of his weapon, ejaculated, " God be with us ! Jehovah-nissi, the Lord is my banner !" Gabriel, drawing his weapon, stood in an attitude of defence, and flourishing his sword, with a very desperate and determined look, seemed evidently prepared to die upon the spot, should he be reduced to the necessity of defending himself and his companions.

Fortunately for all parties, when the matrons had carried their complaint to the Forum, the Prætor of the city happening to be present, had put himself at the head of the mob, for the double purpose of preserving the peace, and discovering and punishing the offenders. In the former object he might not perhaps have succeeded, had he not encountered, within a few paces of the inn, a party of soldiers returning



to the guard-house, and commanded the assistance of the centurion in securing the culprits, and escorting them to prison.

The very appearance of this municipal dignitary, as he strutted into the room, was such as not only to remove all apprehension of his sanctioning the smallest outrage, but even to command confidence in his kind intentions; for although his manner was so abundantly consequential as to form an almost ridiculous contrast with his dapper, diminutive figure, there was an expression of good-humoured benevolence and honesty in his face which could not be mistaken. “Lictor! advance the fasces!” he exclaimed, standing at a little distance from the door, while his officer came forward with the symbols of authority. “I am the Prætor of Brundusium,” he continued, in a pompous voice, at the same time throwing back his prætextan robe, and studiously displaying the broad borders of his laticlavian tunic, as irre-

fragable evidences of his office. "Strangers! you are my prisoners, and I command you to surrender quietly. Silence, without there, ye brawling knaves! is this your respect for the Prætor? By Hercules! I will unloose the rods, and command the Ædiles to break your sconces, if ye keep up this clamorous coil in the presence of your chief magistrate."

Again turning towards the culprits, and observing that they retained their attitude of defence, he exclaimed, in a lower tone, "Ædepol! et Æcastor! What are you about? Are you mad? Put up your weapons; yield yourselves my prisoners, and I will be responsible for your safety. To attempt resistance is only to run the risk of being torn to pieces."

"We surrender," said the Sagan, lowering his weapon; "I only implore safety and protection for my daughter."

"Oh spare my father!" exclaimed Zillah,

coming forward; “he is proceeding to the Senate of Rome, as Ambassador from the King of the Jews, and in that sacred character is entitled to immunity for his person.”

“Heja!” ejaculated the Prætor; “what need had your fellow-countryman to steal a forbidden peep at our Venus, when he had so stately a one at home? ay, and a Verticordian one, too.”

Laying his hand upon his heart, as if to illustrate his meaning, the little magistrate looked up at Zillah with an air of prodigious gallantry, and continued in a whisper, “Lady, be not alarmed, either for yourself or your friends; follow me in silence; trust every thing to me, and you shall all be safely delivered from this dilemma. Lictor!” he cried, again raising his voice; “advance, and clear the way. Ædiles! keep back the populace! What ho, Centurion! order up your soldiers, that they may take charge of these audacious foreigners. I myself

will accompany them and see them safely lodged in prison ! Make way—stand back ! make way for the prisoners !”

“ Is it your order, master, that I should sheathe my sword ?” enquired Simon, who still preserved a menacing attitude.

“ Even so, brave Simon, for resistance were of no avail.”

“ Bear witness, then, that I surrender myself to your orders, and not to these accursed pagans and idolaters,” said the Levite, unwillingly returning his weapon to its scabbard.

When our unlucky travellers reached the street, the mob pressed around them in the most alarming manner, while, with menacing looks and gestures, they shouted out, “ Let us seize the bearded barbarians ! Lay hands upon the blasphemers ! Secure the young sorceress ! Let the whole party be stoned to death ! Crucify them ! crucify them !” The soldiers, however, who were a detachment of veterans, enclosing

their prisoners on every side, effectually kept off the rabble, and proceeded steadily towards the prison, the Centurion marching at their head, and the Prætor bringing up the rear. The unconcerned visages of the weatherbeaten escort, who had been too much used to war and bloodshed to feel any interest in this brawl among the plebeians of the town,—the infuriated countenances of the vociferous populace,—the pompous strut of the Prætor, preceded by the Lic-tor with his fasces,—and the downcast looks of the prisoners, seemed to arrest the attention of the spectators as they passed along, many of whom made enquiry as to the cause of their seizure, though none expressed the smallest sympathy when informed that the offenders were Jews and blasphemers of the Gods. In this manner were they conducted through the town to one of the city gates, which was then used as a prison. Here, amid the deafening yells and execrations of the mob, they were

ushered into a small dark chamber at the bottom of a tower : the massive door was then closed upon them and secured with bars ; the soldiers withdrew ; the shouts of the populace gradually died away ; and the Sagan and his unfortunate companions, on the very first day of their arrival upon the Roman territory, found themselves ignominiously immured, like common malefactors, and accused of an offence which would probably lead to the most perilous consequences, should the Prætor be unable to realize his benevolent promises.

## CHAPTER III.

NEITHER the thoughts nor the conversation of our prisoners were, as it may well be imagined, of a very cheering nature; nor was the chamber into which they had been thrust calculated to dispel their misgivings, for it only admitted sufficient light, through a single loop-hole, at some distance from the ground, to disclose the forlorn and melancholy character of the place. Several rings were affixed to the wall, and the rude scrawlings of initials and names upon the adjoining stones attested that many unhappy wretches had been chained to these spots, who, after thus attempting to be-



guile the tedious hours of imprisonment, had probably been long since released from their sufferings by death. Gabriel, however, who appeared to have much deeper apprehensions about his concealed jewels than for his own safety, did his utmost to support the spirits of his companions ; and professing unbounded confidence in the friendly intentions of the little Prætor, offered to bet a Pinna-Marina pearl against a pill, that he would fulfil his promises, and soon set them at liberty. In confirmation of this opinion, he observed, that they had hitherto been subjected to no indignity, beyond what was absolutely necessary to preserve them from the ferocious bigotry of the populace, since they had neither been chained nor manacled, nor had their arms been taken away from them ; nor—and this he considered of more consequence than any thing else —had they yet been searched.

The Sagan declared that he could put no

trust in the most solemn assurances of a pagan, however plausible and specious might be the appearances in his favour. He expressed, moreover, considerable apprehensions lest the fact of their being ambassadors from Antigonus, which they had urged in their defence, should come to the ears of Herod, who was then in the town, and who, in that case, would not fail to concert measures for the defeat of their purpose, and perhaps for their destruction. Under the influence of these gloomy apprehensions, he deeply regretted that he had ever removed his daughter from Jerusalem, and wished in vain that they had at least reached Rome before their troubles began, when she would have been placed under the protection of her relations in that city, and have avoided the perils with which himself and his embassy were likely to be environed.

To support the courage and confidence of her father, Zillah reminded him, that although there

was no charge whatever against herself or Simon, they had both been included in the arrest; whence she deduced the inference, that their incarceration was a mere measure of security on the part of the friendly Prætor, who would doubtless redeem his promise, and effect their liberation, as soon as it could be accomplished with safety to all parties. Although she advanced this opinion with more confidence, perhaps, than she really felt, her own secret convictions did not altogether discourage it, for she had sufficient trust, even in a pagan's countenance, to believe that the Prætor was an honest and a humane man; and upon this point the superior tact, or, perhaps, the more congenial sympathies of a woman, will seldom allow her to be mistaken, or to distrust her own impressions. The predictions, however, of Nabal the Black Shadow, came across her mind, and imbued it, in spite of the exterior serenity which she assumed, with vague feelings of melancholy.

The trials and troubles which had assailed her so immediately after her setting foot upon the Roman shores, afforded a present corroboration of what he had foretold, and filled her with anxiety as to the future ; for that which was to come might be of a much darker nature than what she had already experienced,—and its vagueness constantly occasioned it to assume a more formidable character than if her imagination had been enabled to define and embody it. For her father's sake, however, she was cautious not to betray the smallest misgiving of mind, exhibiting in her countenance her customary self-possession, and in her conversation endeavouring to uphold the now waning fortitude of her fellow-prisoners.

There was some excuse, indeed, for the despondency that began to steal over them, for, as the night closed in, the light died away from their loop-hole window, until they were involved in total darkness : they heard the city-gates

closed, the guard mounted, and as every sound gradually subsided into a profound silence, only interrupted by the occasional tramp of a sentry, they began to fear that they should be left to pass the night in that miserable apartment, which was totally unprovided with furniture or accommodations of any sort. The conversation flagged, until at last it dropped altogether ; and they had remained for a short interval in an anxious silence, amid the obscurity of their dungeon, when Zillah, knowing that nothing was so likely to kindle the patriotic courage and devout zeal of her companions, as a reference to the consolations of their religion, exclaimed in an animated tone, “ What ! my friends, have we not the God of Jacob for our help—the Lord who looseth the prisoners, and preserveth the strangers ? If my memory fail me not, I will chant to you the hundred and forty-sixth psalm. It is suited to our present need ; and even were it not, it will be a pride to me to

make these doleful walls, and the waters of the moat without, and the surrounding echoes, which have so often responded to the cry of pagans calling upon their idols and their false deities, reply, for the first time, to the voice of a Jewish maiden, as she invokes the assistance of the one and only true God.”—The dead silence, the darkness of the place, and the forlornness of their situation, imparted a deep solemnity to the strain, as her sweet and mellow voice arose upon the stillness of the night ; while the sentiments she was uttering, awakened such an enthusiasm in her auditors, that they dashed despondency from their thoughts, and spontaneously joined her in the last verse, chanting it aloud and boldly in the returning cheerfulness and courage of their hearts.

The sound of their devotions, perhaps, reminded the jailor of the instructions he had received respecting them ; for silence had hardly been restored, when he presented him-

self with a lamp, and informed them, that he had been ordered by the Prætor, before he took his departure, to furnish them with a more comfortable lodging for the night. He accordingly conducted them to another and much less desolate apartment, in which were three pallets, and which opened upon a closet beyond, supplied with a bed, where, as he intimated, the lady might take her repose. Having made this most gratifying improvement in their quarters, he deposited his lamp upon the table, and took his departure, leaving his prisoners filled with gratitude and reverence at a sudden change in their lot, which, coming so immediately after their hymn, inspired them at once with reliance upon the assurances of the Prætor, and an increased confidence in the protection of Heaven.

This complacent mood was by no means diminished on the part of Gabriel and Simon, when two of the prison servants shortly after



made their appearance, bringing in a late but not unacceptable supper, consisting of such homely viands as the place supplied, although administered with a degree of neatness that made some atonement for their coarse quality. Such favourable auguries were deduced from these unexpected marks of attention, that the whole party partook more cheerfully of their humble repast than they would have supposed possible a little while before. After the conclusion of their meal, the Sagan read from the Scriptures, of which he always carried a copy about his person, such prayers and thanksgivings as were most apposite to the predicament in which they were placed; when his daughter withdrew to her little chamber, and the others committed themselves to their pallets for the night.

So uniform and placid had been the former life of Zillah, and so great was the contrast of the tumultuous scenes to which she had this

day been exposed, that, notwithstanding her constitutional calmness and self-possession, her mind remained too much agitated to allow her for some time to forget herself in repose. It seemed so incredible that she should be stretched upon a miserable bed in a prison, that she could hardly divest herself of the impression of the whole adventure being a dream, until the clank of arms and the tramping of feet, occasioned by the relief of the guard upon the ramparts without, convinced her of the reality of her incarceration. When, however, after long communing with her anxious thoughts, she at length sank into sleep, her slumbers remained unbroken, until the clamour of the country people thronging to the market with their carts, and shouting out to the soldiers to open the gates and let them pass, aroused her at the dawn of day. The heavy rolling of the ponderous portals, and the rumbling of the loaded vehicles as they were driven into the

town, preventing all possibility of farther repose, she got up, and, placing herself at the narrow grated window, amused herself with gazing at the various carriages and passengers, or in comparing her own strange lot, imprisoned as she was in a foreign land, with the gaiety and glee of the rustic lasses who were trudging beneath her with their baskets, some singing, some laughing, and others coquetting with the guard stationed on either side of the gateway.

She had continued for some time thus absorbed, when she heard her father calling her, and at the same moment thought she could distinguish the voice of a stranger in the adjoining apartment. Upon entering it, she beheld the Prætor, who saluted her with a bustling but cordial courtesy, called her banteringly his Venus Verticordia, and enquired whether she were ready at that early hour to take her departure. Upon her answering in the affirmative,

he put his finger to his lips, as if to enjoin silence ; and, desiring the whole party to follow him, he led the way to the gate of the prison, at which a carriage was waiting surrounded by armed men on horseback. Obeying the signals made to her, she stepped into it ; the Sagan, Gabriel, and Simon followed ; the Prætor mounted a stately steed, ludicrously disproportioned to the dimensions of its rider ; and the whole party, leaving the town behind them, were presently moving at a round pace along the broad Appian way. When they had got well clear of the suburbs, the Prætor, desiring the armed escort to keep themselves at some distance behind, and ordering the driver to relax his speed, rode up to the side of the carriage, and fell into conversation with the Sagan.

“ Ohe Cœlites !” he exclaimed, wiping his forehead, for the trotting of his great horse had already thrown him into a heat, “ what a sultry morning have we here, and how suffocating is

this dust !—Euge ! what a lucky man may you reckon yourself !—Lady, you are more fortunate than the blind Goddess herself : it was an auspicious day that brought your party to Brundusium ; so, prithee, let it henceforward be marked in all your tablets with a white stone.”

“Are we then to deem ourselves fortunate,” enquired the Sagan, “that the inn where we sought shelter proved to us a Bethshean—a house of tumult ; that we were nearly torn to pieces by a fanatical mob ; that we passed the night in prison ; and that we are this morning hurried away, we know not why or whither, under an armed escort ?”

“You have only to thank yourselves and your own imprudence, that these things happened ; but you may well be grateful to the Gods that they occurred at Brundusium, where you might be saved from the penalty of your folly by the interference of an enlightened Prætor—hem ! We have one Caius Drusus, a tur-

bulent fellow in the town, who is courting popularity that he may be made a Quæstor, and who, as I learnt last night, had promised the rabble that you should this day be brought to trial in the Forum; in which case I would not have given a silverling for your chance of an acquittal. Ere Apollo, therefore, had shot his first arrows of light over the waters, I armed my slaves, and, informing the jailor that, as you had claimed the privilege of an ambassador, you must be despatched to Rome to take your trial, I waited the opening of the gate, popped you and your companions into my own carriage, and behold! here we are, trotting along the Appian road, and safe, as I hope, from the designs of the would-be Quæstor, and the fangs of the rabblement, who would have handled you but roughly had you been so unfortunate as to fall into their power. I ordered you to be conducted to the prison of the gate, in preference to that in the market-place, that your

escape into the country might be effected without observation. —Aha! was not my plan daintily devised and seasonably executed? I never boast, but you will find that the Prætor of Brundisium has a genius—a faculty—a brain, Sir, a brain!”

The Sagan expressed the warmest gratitude, both of himself and his companions, for the skill and kindness with which their deliverance had been effected; but so deeply rooted was his hatred of the Pagans, that he could not make this merited acknowledgment to an individual, without venting a reproach against the nation. “I had heard,” he added, “that the Romans were tolerant of other religions, but I find that I was grievously mistaken.”

“We tolerate and even adopt all those that will allow us to receive and foster them,” replied the Prætor, “and you will find at Rome not only temples erected to all the known deities, but even to those that are unknown, lest



we should have omitted homage to any divinity through mere ignorance. With you Jews, however, who fiercely condemn, attack, and proscribe all religions but your own, there can be no compromise, and still less any amalgamation. The sea receives into its maternal bosom all the rivers that flow towards it, from whatever country they may come; but when a burning stream from Mount Etna carries fire and fury into its calm waters, they have no alternative but to overwhelm and quench their assailant, and hiss its very memory into oblivion.—Aha! what say you, stranger,—is not this a happy illustration?”

“We are intolerant, because we alone are right. There can be but one true religion.”

“Granted. But there may be a thousand whose followers all think theirs to be the true one; and, whatever may be the errors of his faith, that man must surely be right in his practice, who imitates the Supreme Being, by tole-

rating the blindness and mistakes of human nature. The best belief is that which preserves the greatest charity and forbearance."

"I will not willingly give offence," said the Sagan; "but when you speak thus rationally of the Supreme Being, may I enquire whether you really mean the tutelary deity of your town, whom I am accused of having blasphemed?"

"O Jupiter Philie, hospitalis, sodalitie, fulgurator, juramenti præses!" exclaimed the Prætor, with a mock solemnity. "Forgive me, O cloud-compelling Jove! if, in spite of your innumerable names and offices, I confess, in a whisper—ay, and *sub Jove* too—that I believe not in one tittle of your divinity. Papæ! my friend, did you imagine that we of the enlightened classes—we, who enrol ourselves among the wits and philosophers—put faith in all the inventions of the poets, and really give credit to the thirty thousand deities of the vulgar? If we assist in maintaining this army of divini-

ties, it is only that it may keep the lower classes and the rabble in order."

"In what sort of order? In order for tumult and outrage, for hatred and violence? in order for such a scene as we witnessed yesterday at the inn? And yet this same populace will quietly, as I have been informed, hear the same deities openly ridiculed and degraded by their native poets and playwrights."

"Because they like to see their superiors, whether celestial or human, brought down to their own level, by writers who at the same time admit the divinity of the parties they are satirizing; but from an universal infidel like you, a taunt becomes a personal insult, and the mob are too religious worshippers of their own opinions to submit patiently to such a profanation. You would have been exposed, however, to no annoyance, had you not wantonly committed the first aggression."

"Strange! that you should have a religion

for the lower orders, which the upper classes recognise and uphold even while they disbelieve it."

"Not at all. Establishments are much more durable than opinions: the ritual survives the faith; the temple outlasts the religion that founded it; and when a priesthood, endowed with large revenues, has become interwoven with the institutions of a country, they may remain and flourish long after their creed has fallen into discredit. What suits one æra is unfitted for another: the times of Numa are very different from those of Antony and Octavianus. A religion becomes superannuated at last, and dies; but a new one will be sure to spring up, and, as the world grows older and wiser, it will be equally sure to improve upon its predecessor!"

"You Pagans may indeed say so, because you have never yet known the truth, which is immutable and eternal."

“ Was not that the true religion which instigated me to effect your deliverance from the hands of my own countrymen, and at my own imminent hazard?—Aha! stranger, have I posed you? Are you dumbfounded? You will find that Brundusium’s Prætor is a Rhetor also. Go to; you have to deal with a philosopher—not a peripatetic, but of the equestrian order.” He patted his horse on the neck, to render the allusion intelligible; and then laughing heartily at his own joke, and striking his forehead with the tip of his finger, he added, “ Did I not tell you that I have a genius—a faculty—a brain, Sir, a brain?”

Fatigued as well as heated with the exertion of riding and philosophizing at the same time, he now checked his horse into a walk, and dropped behind, leaving the travellers at liberty to express their opinion of this little magisterial personage, who, with all his pomposity and conceit, seemed not only to be much more enlight-

ened than they had expected to find any of the Pagans, but had proved the generous humanity of his heart by conferring upon utter strangers, and with a considerable degree of responsibility to himself, a service of which it was impossible to ever estimate the importance. Zillah was fervent in the expression of her gratitude, adducing his conduct as an argument in favour of that enlarged philanthropy which would include the virtuous of all countries in its love ; but the Sagan, yielding the tribute that was due to their liberator with a more grudging spirit, warned his daughter not to argue from the exception instead of the rule, but to look at the ferocious and besotted multitude who had assailed them at the inn, if she wished to form a just estimate of a Pagan and idolatrous nation.

After they had thus conversed together for some time, they observed that their mounted escort passed ahead of them, pressing forward with increased speed, when the Prætor, again

presenting himself at the side of the carriage, and pointing to a house at some little distance, informed them that it was his villa, at which he hoped they would partake of some refreshment before they pursued their journey to Rome; assuring them, at the same time, that it would well recompense the delay, as it was universally allowed to be the most tasteful, elegant, and complete country-house in the whole province, or perhaps in the whole empire. A short ride brought them to the gate, when the master of the mansion, dismounting from his steed, began to call about him with a most swaggering and consequential pomposity, "What ho! where are the rest of my people? Only these few varlets in attendance! Hip! Davus, Syrus, Thrax, Græculus, Africanus, Milo, where have ye all got to?" He clapped his hands repeatedly to summon them, when several servants came running forward, betray-



ing by their heated countenances that they had formed part of the escort, although they had changed their dresses, and were evidently meant to be passed off upon the strangers as a new set of domestics. “Where is Geta, that he brings not the pan of incense?” continued the Prætor. “Tell Tiro to order a repast in the Grotto of Pomona;—direct my warm bath to be got ready instantly.—Aha! here comes Geta. Sirrah! hold your censer higher, and march slowly before us. Forward, slaves, forward!—Now, my friends,—now, my Barbigeri,—now, my Verticordian Venus, you shall have a sample of the Brundusian taste. We have a right, indeed, to be classical, for our city was the birthplace of Pacuvius the poet; and it is, moreover, a renowned and ancient place, founded, as it is said, by Diomed, after the Trojan war, and therefore one of the oldest in the world.”

“ Even if this record of its foundation be correct,” said the Sagan, “ our city of Jerusalem may boast a much higher antiquity.”

“ Aha ! you are a wag, I see, like myself, —a wag, Sir, a wag,” exclaimed the Prætor, punching the Sagan in the side ; “ but you must not attempt to pass off your Hebrew fables upon us. Jerusalem older than Brundisium ! Ha ! ha ! ha ! excellent, i’faith !”

“ Your villa is charmingly situated,” said Zillah, anxious to change the subject ; for she saw by the inflation of her father’s lip, that he was preparing to vindicate the superior antiquity of the Holy City,—a point which, she was quite sure, the Brundusian would never concede.

“ It is not the situation of which I am proud, lady, for that is Nature’s merit, though I have incalculably improved upon her poor designs ; but the plan, the skill, the judgment, the taste with which every thing—Vah ! Apage !

—Cicero has boasted a great deal of his Tusculum, which is a thing I never do myself; but if he had seen my villa, I suspect he would have had the good sense to hold his tongue.—Poor Cicero! I little thought when he came here to plead the great cause of the fisheries, (by the by, he had a most enormous fee for that job,) that his head would be so soon after lying upon a table for Antony to make sport of, and that Fulvia would pierce through with her gold bodkin that tongue which had—but, *tace!* hush! each of the Triumviri is a sovereign now; and as the Greek proverb tells us that the king has many eyes and many ears, we must teach our tongues to beware of the gold bodkin.—Aha, my bearded friends, is not all this chaste and classical? Be not in a hurry; let us proceed leisurely; there will be time to see the whole before the repast is ready; and I think you will admit that I have a taste—a genius—a faculty—a brain, Sirs, a brain!”

The domain of which the worthy little magistrate was so proud, was in every respect a complete specimen of a Roman cockney villa; its diminutive proportions being much better adapted to the bodily dimensions of its owner, than to the crowd of full-grown statues, the baths, grottoes, fishponds, porches, porticoes, terraces, cascades, fountains, and other appurtenances of a regular country mansion, which were huddled together upon so small a scale as to impart to the whole the air of a model or a child's plaything, rather than of a real habitation; while every thing was so grievously over-decorated as to betray a much greater abundance of money than of good taste on the part of its proprietor. "This way, this way," exclaimed the delighted Prætor, walking ahead of his visitants, for there was not room for more than two abreast; "here, you see, is my Gestatio, or place of exercise." He pointed, as he spoke, to a walk about twenty feet long,

where none but a Lilliputian could have ambled himself into a perspiration. "As I generally exert my limbs here for some time," he continued, "in order to achieve an appetite for my dinner, I have had the box hedge on either side cut into the resemblance of birds, beasts, and fishes, that they may stimulate my imagination, and excite hunger while they delight the eye.—How say you? is not this a dainty contrivance? do not you already begin to feel a craving for your breakfast?"

The Sagan answered in the affirmative, hoping by this confession not only to please his host, but to escape being dragged round the remainder of the grounds; but the pitiless Prætor, not taking the hint, ushered them into a small circular walk, surrounded with tonsile evergreens, cut into every variety of fantastical device, and interspersed with statues, many of which were painted, and all provided with coloured glass eyes, which seemed to stare por-

tentously at the visitants as they approached. "This is my circus, my hippodrome," said their conductor. "Though you are enemies to the shears, if I may judge by the bushes upon your chins, tell me, are not these evergreens most ingeniously sculptured,—exhibiting, you see, every diversity of shape, and yet not one of them like any thing that really exists?"

"The same may be said of these stone deities," observed the Sagan. "Why do you set up their statues when you no longer believe in them?"

"I do believe in them as ornaments of my garden, and as works of art, in which I am allowed to have an undoubted taste.—Ha ! ha ! ha ! I never approach this Satyr without laughing. My wag of a boy (ah ! he is his father's own son) has given him, as you see, a squinting eye, and has scrawled upon the pedestal the name of Caius Drusus, our would-be Quæstor, who, you must know, has a most

ominous cast in his left peeper. Look! he has added in small letters the word Strabus, or the squinter, after the name. Oh the satirical little rogue!—that boy will cut a figure in the Forum one of these days.—There! there! now you must all stop a moment. Here is an opening, you see, for a view of my farm. The statues are all appropriate,—Pan, Ceres, Vertumnus, Pomona, and other rural deities. Aha! the man that lays out a villa in this style must have a genius—a faculty—a taste—a brain, Sir, a brain.”

The meadow upon which they were gazing, not more than half an acre in extent, was stocked with some three dozen sheep, whose fleeces, in conformity with a preposterous fashion that obtained in much larger and more tastefully displayed grounds than the Prætor’s, were dyed of different colours, under the notion of rendering them an embellishment to the pasture. The flock of our Brundusian pro-



prietor exhibited the most vivid tints of scarlet, yellow, and blue, which, as he asserted, often assumed such picturesque combinations, as almost to supersede the necessity of a flower-garden. "Look," he exclaimed, "at that tall scarlet sheep among the yellow ones. Can you not almost fancy that it is a poppy amid the corn? What think you of that idea?—is it not pretty and pastoral?"

Ere any reply could be given to his interrogatory, the shouting, laughing, and scrambling of children were heard ; and the Prætor's family, having just learnt his arrival, came scampering uproariously round the hippodrome to discover and welcome their father. He kissed them all with great appearance of affection ; and after introducing his son by the name of Lucius, telling his visitants in a whisper, loud enough to be overheard by the child, that this was the wag, a satirical little rogue, and a boy of prodigious genius, he successively presented his

daughters, Lucia, Secundilla, Tertulla, and Quartilla, enquiring of the latter, as he concluded the ceremony, what had become of her little brother. He had been left behind, it seemed, in the race of his companions; but this sixth and last of the family, a child apparently of three or four years old, soon came trotting forward with a small pan of meal in his hand, although, upon gaining sight of the strangers, he stopped short, eyeing them with a look of alarm and mistrust, as if uncertain whether to advance or run away. After a short delay, however, during which he fixed his eyes very intently upon the Sagan, he came cautiously forward, holding out his pan at arm's-length, and exclaiming in the most winning and endearing voice he could assume, as if to conciliate a favourable reception, "Caper ! Caper ! Caper !"

"Euge ! Papæ ! Mirificum !" ejaculated his father, bursting out into a peal of immoderate laughter—"may I perish, if the child, who was

going to feed our poor old goat, does not judge by your beard that you may be one of the family ! and, behold ! the dear little fellow called you by the animal's name, and offered you a portion of his pan. Was there ever such an extraordinary infant !”

The delighted parent snatched up and hugged his little miracle of a boy as he called him ; the others shrieked with ungovernable laughter at the mistake ; the child roared because his father had made him spill all his meal ; but so hugely was the joke relished by the rest of the family, that it was some time before any individual voice could be distinguished in the general hubbub of their enjoyment. The first intelligible sounds were an enquiry of two or three at once, whether the strangers had visited the fish-pond ; and upon an answer being given in the negative, the wag Lucius and his sisters bounded forward, racing with one another in their eagerness to be first at the spot where the

visitants were to be treated with some fresh evidences of their father's hortulan taste and notable contrivances.

The fish-pond in question, about the size of a modern pound for cattle, and supplied by a cascade scarcely larger than a respectable gutter, had a Triton in its centre, sending up a puny stream from his shell, which, as it fell back, bespattered the heads of the river and marine gods thickly planted around the basin, and kept the poor fish in a perpetual pucker. This watery pantheon was enclosed by a hedge of box, in which the name of the proprietor had been cut out in leafy letters nearly as tall as himself,—an ingenious fancy, to which he pointed with infinite complacency, observing with a most apt and ready felicity, that, as he thus lived in a tree, he ought to have been married to one of the Hamadryads. “To the arbour! to the arbour!” cried the children impatiently. “Hush! you little rogues!” exclaimed the

father, putting his hand to his lips.—“Now, mind you don’t tell,” said Lucia to one of her sisters. “It was not I, but Quartilla who let the cat out of the bag last time,” replied the child. Meanwhile Lucius, the wag, and his second sister, taking the hands of the Sagan and Gabriel, dragged them forward to a little harbour, importunately urging them to sit down in it, as it commanded the most charming view imaginable. No sooner had they complied with this request, than they found themselves plentifully sprinkled with water, which, by a contrivance somewhat similar to our shower-baths, had been lodged in a reservoir above, and was detached when any one pressed down the seat beneath. A shout of triumphant merriment attested the success of their plot: the urchins jumped and capered with very glee; the Prætor laughed till it brought on a fit of coughing, which threatened to choke him; and he had no sooner recovered, than, giving the Sagan one of

his facetious punches in the ribs, he exclaimed, while the tears ran down his cheeks, “Aha! Barbiger! Caper! we caught you there finely; but you must not mind it,—I told you I was a bit of a wag.”

“A bit indeed!” muttered the Sagan, not altogether relishing these practical jokes. “I wish you were either more or less. Methinks such pranks were better played off upon some of your slaves or freedmen.”

“Are not you my freedmen, since I this day set you free from prison?—Aha! have I caught you there a second time? I thought you Hebrews were too fond of lustrations, and libations, and purifications, to mind a gentle aspersion, which, moreover, is at this season of a refreshing and salubrious tendency.—But come, we will return towards the mansion.—Lucius! show the way to the tennis-court and the statue-gallery.”

The youthful wag, desiring them to follow him, turned the corner of one of the walks, and

in a moment after was heard to utter a cry of terror, and to call aloud for help. Gabriel was rushing forward to assist him, when he started back in utter consternation and dismay at the sight of a rampant tiger apparently leaping towards him. The animal was painted upon a door, which swung to as he approached,—the skill of the artist combining with the darkness of the shaded walk, to produce a deception, which in the present instance had completely answered its momentary purpose, and elicited a fresh burst of exulting merriment from the whole party. “Macte ! age !” ejaculated the Prætor, patting Gabriel on the back, and wiping his own eyes with the sleeve of his robe—“you have no more trials to endure ; you have passed the Styx, and are about to enter upon the Elysian fields.—Aha ! was not this capital ? It is a all contrivance of my own. Said I not that I had a faculty—a taste—a genius—a brain, Sir, a brain ?”



A few minutes' walk brought them to a terrace, planted with cypresses cut into the form of obelisks, alternating with glass-eyed statues; from this they stepped into a swaggering circular portico, standing round the little villa like a guard of grenadiers encircling a drum, and giving itself all the airs of marble because its wooden columns were painted in imitation of Scagliola. Sick as they already were of the good Prætor's cackling conceit, as well as of the ostentatious insignificance of his Tusculum, they were obliged to accompany him to his baths, and then to his tennis-court, or rather to a paltry enclosure which bore the name; for so circumscribed were its dimensions, that even his children, when they attempted the game, were obliged to hit the ball gently, lest it should bound from one wall to the other, and defraud their uplifted rackets. The delighted and indefatigable Prætor next dragged his guests to his statue-gallery, a narrow passage so called,

where the Divinities, elbowing one another, touched the ceiling with their heads, like so many dwarf Caryatides; while the visitants were obliged to move cautiously among them, lest they should irreverently knock the thunder out of Jupiter's hand, deprive Diana of her bow, or despoil the God of thieves of his Caduceus. Geta, the slave, who had hitherto marched before his master with the fuming pan of incense,—a mark of dignity with which the Prætor never dispensed,—was now dismissed; and the party, entering the dwelling-house, were ushered into the great banqueting-room,—an apartment of which the extent by no means justified the appellation. Here they were very coldly, not to say repulsively received by the lady of the house,—a thin, sickly, shrewish-looking woman, who had employed the whole interval since their first arrival in bedizening her person with all the jewels and finery for which her lank figure would afford

room. Her eyes flared with a spiteful suspicion, as she threw a glance at Zillah; and beckoning her husband to a recess at the farther extremity of the room, while the visitants were amusing themselves with the children, she said in a tart whisper, "Who are these bearded barbarians that you have brought to the house, at this early hour, without giving me warning? By his staff and scrip I suppose one of them is a philosopher. But I will have no more of that tribe, I promise you; for the last, you may recollect, got tipsy with our most expensive wine, and then said that for his own part he preferred water, though he always chose the costliest wines out of compliment to his host."

"They are no philosophers, my life and my soul, but unfortunate Jews, whom I have this morning liberated from prison."

"Jews! Jews!—what had you to do with letting them out? I thought Pompey had

killed them all,—and serve them right too; for I have been told that the brutish barbarians are infidels, and worship an ass's head. And yonder great owl-eyed wench, is she one of their tribe? I like not the hussy's looks."

"Nay, surely she has the look and deportment of a very vestal, though I have named her in jest my Verticordian Venus."

"Your what, Sir—your what? Not but that she is big enough for the character, in all conscience. But, lookye, Prætor, I'll have no goddess in this house but myself; so I desire that you will set the Jews and their jade troop-ing, packing, trudging, as soon as may be. Had I known who it was, I should never have taken the pains to dress myself for any such visitants."

The submissive husband promised that they should depart as soon as they had partaken of a repast which he had ordered; and with this understanding the wife returned to her seat:

wearing, however, a most stately and forbidding aspect, and not contributing a single syllable to the conversation. A servant soon announced that their meal was ready, and they proceeded to the Grotto of Pomona, so called because the walls were bristling with shells, and a tree was painted upon the ceiling, surcharged with glistening apples of a most formidable size. To confirm the claim of this apartment to its title, there was, moreover, in one corner a marble basin filled with water, which served as a table, the larger dishes being placed round the margin, while the smaller ones floated about in the form of little boats and water-fowl. This, too, was a contrivance of their ingenious host ; but he boasted of it in a subdued tone, and with a much tamer exultation,—for the look, voice, and spirit of the pompous little Prætor were all rebuked by the presence of his wife, of whom he evidently stood in awe, though he did his utmost to affect an air of nonchalance and master-

dom. Even the preternatural discernment of their little boy in mistaking their visitant for a relation of their old goat, a story which he detailed with prodigious satisfaction to himself, failing to dissipate his wife's reserve, he seemed at last to catch the infection of her taciturnity, attributing his diminished hilarity to a headache occasioned by the heat and the fatigue of riding. Silence, stiffness, and constraint, presided over their plenteous and yet uncomfortable repast, which was no sooner concluded than the hostess, as she left the room, gave her husband a signal with her eye, which he seemed perfectly to understand and accustomed to obey. His former briskness and vivacity, however, returned almost immediately upon her quitting the apartment; even while complying with her orders, he recovered possession of himself. "Aha! my Caper, my Barbiger, my Venus Verticordia!" he exclaimed, as he strutted up and down the grotto in the pride of his regained

independence, "it is well to be merry, but it is better to be merry and wise. You must not forget that you are still within a march of Brundisium, and that it would be wise to lose no time in putting yourselves beyond the reach of this turbulent hunter after popularity, Caius Drusus."

"Strabus !" added his son, as if to complete the sentence. "Aha! you little wag ! Eugene ! that boy will play the very havoc at the Forum ! Well, 'Strabus' be it ; but, squint-eyed as he is, he may find out where I have brought his intended victims ; and if he should march hither at the head of the mob to seize them——"

"Eli !" ejaculated the Sagan—"is there any chance of this ? Let us be gone instantly."

"There is a possibility of such an occurrence certainly ; and it may therefore be as well to hurry forward. You will soon regain the high-road to Rome."

"Regain it ? have we then deviated from it ?"



“ Not above five miles ; so that you will only lose ten in all.”

“ How could you think of bringing us ten miles out of our road, and detaining us so long here, if we are in danger of a pursuit ?”

“ Papæ ! what a question ! why, to show you the completest villa in all Italy, which it is well worth coming fifty miles to see ; ay, and if it should even occasion your arrest and execution, it would surely be a consolation to you, in your last moments, that you had seen the Prætor of Brundusium’s celebrated mansion.”

“ Let us quit the heathen’s roof,” said the Sagan in Hebrew—“ I question whether he would have liberated us from prison at all, had it not been for the purpose of showing us his villa.”

“ Ah !” resumed the Prætor—“ I wish you could have stayed half an hour longer to hear my boy recite those fine verses about the fortune-tellers out of old Quintus Ennius. He

has just been learning fifty lines out of a new poet, who is now coming into fashion, one—one—what is his name, Lucius ? ”

“ Virgilius Maro,” replied the boy.

“ Ay, ay, it always slips my memory, as it soon will every body’s else. He can never compete with my old friend Ennius, or with his nephew and my fellow-townsmen, Pacuvius. We have genius, Sir—genius, we Brundusians. Vah ! who will mention the name of this Virgilius Maro fifty years hence, I should be glad to know ? There are some who decry his merit altogether, holding him to be a mere imitator. This is illiberal. I have always admitted with the greatest candour that the young man has talents, but they do not lie in rural or heroic matters, nor indeed in any thing that he has yet composed. Oh ! if you could but see my son Lucius dance a Glaucus with his fish’s tail on !—that boy will leave an illustrious name behind him, only mark my words ! You

would be not less delighted to see Lucia and Secundilla dance a Ganymede and a Leda ; but you have no time now, though you can witness it if you should come this way on your return ; which you ought to do, if it were only to call on your bearded relation in the stable. Ha ! ha ! ha !—Hark ! I hear the carriage drawing round to the porch.—Farewell, my Barbigeri ! farewell, my Venus Verticordia ! If you should see any of poor Cicero's relations, don't put them out of conceit with his Tusculum, by saying you have seen my Villa. It is not every body that can do these things. There must be a genius—a faculty—a taste—a brain, Sirs, a brain."

Before their departure, their vainglorious but kind-hearted host gave them an order upon the commissaries of the Appian road, who, as he informed them, were obliged by the *Lex Julia de Provinciis* to forward them to Rome, since they were proceeding thither in a public

capacity, and to provide them with lodging, fire, salt, hay, and straw, at the expense of the government. Furnished with this convenient passport, our travellers renewed their expressions of the most fervent gratitude to the Prætor for his kind and critical interference in their favour, bade him and his marvellous children adieu, remounted their carriage, and soon regained the Appian way, without encountering Caius Drusus, or any of his Brundusian myrmidons.

## CHAPTER IV.

“ ALAS ! my dear father ! ” exclaimed Zillah, “ we have made but an inauspicious commencement of our journey ; and, that we may not be exposed to similar perils hereafter, I would implore you and our good kinsman Gabriel, for the sake of the commission wherewith ye are charged, for your own sakes, for the sake of the friends we have left behind at Jerusalem, to be more discreet and circumspect, to pity the blindness of the idolaters among whom we are wandering, and not needlessly to offend their prejudices, or attack their errors.”

“Prejudices! errors! my dear child! Why say you not rather their brutal besotted ignorance, their monstrous iniquities, their God-insulting abominations? Spare them? The Philistines, the Canaanites, the Edomites, the Moabites, the worshippers of the Assyrian Succoth-Benoth, of Dagon, Belial, Baal-berith, Baal-peor, and Baal-zebub himself, the very prince of devils!”

“But if the Lord spared a whole populous city for the sake of one prophet, surely we may think more charitably of the Romans, if it were only on account of this excellent Prætor, who released us when there was a snare set for us in Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor; and who is, moreover, no believer in the idolatries of his heathen fellow-countrymen.”

“What shall this avail him if he put not faith in the Lord of Jacob and of Israel? He is a mere godless wanderer in the dark; and if he do good in the unguided impulse of his heart,

he is but as one who stumbles in the nighttime and kicks up a treasure with his foot."

"He has at all events done us special service in our own wanderings," observed Gabriel ; "for, if I mistake not, the order upon the Commissaries of the road, wherewith he has provided us, not only secures our safe conveyance to Rome, but entitles us, as we travel, to the services of the Roman cooks, who, as compared with our performers of Jerusalem, are truly like the Zamzummim by the side of the dwarfs.—Rab Malachi, if you are a grateful man, let not the little Prætor be forgotten in your prayers."

"Booshoh he ! Shame upon you, Gabriel of Michmash ! would you have the Sagan of God's Temple pray for an infidel ? What ! do you thus hanker for the fish and the fleshpots, the garlick and onions of Egypt, that you would give your heart to any Pagan who should pamper you with the food of devils ?



Have you no fear of the Anathema? You have listened with a gluttonous stomach rather than with the pure ears of a Hebrew; for the warrant, as the idolater read it, bore no reference to our own sustenance, but only to that of our horses, and to our lodgings at night."

"There still comes up an echo from the dainty and toothsome viands I swallowed in the Grotto of Pomona, which seems to assure me that I heard him make mention of our dinners and suppers upon the road."

"Lodgings, fire, salt, hay, and straw," said Zillah,—“these, if I mistake not, were the extent of his order upon the Commissaries; but my father can show it you, and you can then satisfy yourself, since you deem it a point of such vital importance."

The Sagan took out the paper, which he had thrust into his pouch; but instead of handing it to his kinsman, he attempted to read it himself,—a process, however, that seemed to be attended

with some difficulty. "What is all this?" he at length exclaimed; "I can make neither head nor tail of it: the interpreter who can expound this scrawl must be like him of whom Elihu spoke to Job—one among a thousand." No wonder he was unable to decypher it, for his thoughts had reverted to Jerusalem, and he was unconsciously reading the lines backward. A burst of laughter from Gabriel reminded him of his mistake; when he threw the paper into his kinsman's lap, exclaiming pettishly, "I forgot that I was among barbarians. What mean they, the brainless heathen, by this absurd practice? Does not the sun, God's handwriting in the sky, move from the east to the west, from right to left? and when Jehovah wrote upon the stone tables delivered to Moses upon Mount Sinai, were they not inscribed in the same direction? Do not the heavens teach us what is the natural course? and does not every thing upon earth correspond with it?"

Paradise was in the east, where Man had no sooner quitted his cradle than he began to travel westward, in which direction he will perhaps ultimately find his grave. If the heathen were all left-handed like Ehud, I could the better excuse their awkwardness."

"I have heard," said Gabriel, "that some of the Greeks read their lines forward and backward alternately, as if they were following the furrows of a plough; but, let me spell this document in what direction I may, backward or forward, upward, downward, or cross-ways, I cannot find a syllable in it touching those dinners and suppers of the Government cooks, which have sent up a more savoury fume into my imagination than, I fear, they will ever furnish to my senses."

Zillah, who had been cooped up on board ship till her very heart sickened after the hills and valleys, the woods and waters, and all the green loveliness of nature,—who in her yester-

day's journey had not only passed through an uninteresting country, but had been too much distracted by the conversation of the Prætor, the presence of the armed escort, and her apprehensions of pursuit, to bestow more than a momentary glance upon the scenery,—was now gazing from the carriage-window upon the rich landscape that lay outspread before her, drinking in its beauties with her never-satisfied eyes, inhaling the balmy air with an ineffable delight, tasting the freshness of the shade, and the luxuriance of the verdure in every pore, as if she were actually reposing beneath the gloom of the huge chesnut-trees in the valley below her, or could feel the bright little streamlet that ran rejoicingly beneath them, rippling through her bosom, and bathing her very heart with its cool limpid waters. She had seen valleys, and even extensive plains, in Palestine, fertile, fat, smothered almost in their own luxuriant overgrowth, the tall wild flowers and

lusty grass so thickly intermatted as completely to hide the indigenous mignonette, which was only betrayed by its sweet odours ; but these rich patches never occupied more than a portion of the landscape. The eye could always wander to the distant indigo-blue waters of the Mediterranean ; or, if turned inland, it was sure to encounter some bare craggy mountain lifting up its haggard forehead like a grim spectre ; or else a brown tract of desolation and sterility announced where the garden ended and the gaunt wilderness began ; or the view extending to the rocky heights that environ the Dead Sea, carried the imagination over the ghastly waters of that accursed spot, and into the stony, sun-tormented desert of Arabia. But here the landscape, as far as the eye could reach, and varied as were its component parts, bore one consistent character of softness, amenity, and beauty ; the gently swelling hills and dales, the woods and waters,

the pastures, fields, olive-grounds, and vineyards blended harmoniously together, till they melted into the horizon, or lost themselves in the Apulian mountains, presenting on every side an unbroken extent of verdure and foliage; while the boughs waved indolently in the breeze, as if they were fanning one another; and the cloudless skies looked smilingly down, as if enamoured of the Paradise beneath them.

Zillah gazed till the whole beauty and tranquillity of the prospect stole into her heart, and she sunk into that dreamy unconsciousness when the mind, lost as it were in its interfusion with nature, suffers itself to float idly and vaguely, amid the delicious scenes and sensations by which it is surrounded. This trance of enjoyment was dispelled by the sudden appearance of a troop of rustics, male and female, who emerged from a long straggling glade, and, advancing towards a lofty stone post surmounted

by a bust, placed a garland upon the head of the figure, and began to dance around it to the sound of their own song, of which our travellers were unable to distinguish the words.

“Raca!” ejaculated the Sagan, spitting out of the window—“the fools! the blind, besotted, benighted, idiotic idolaters! This is one of their parish boundary stones, I presume,—their god Terminus, as they impiously call him, whom upon stated occasions they crown with flowers, salute with hymns, and propitiate with offerings:—and, behold! their Deity is sculptured without feet, to show that he can never quit the spot where he is placed!—See, my child, the superiority of the Hebrews over the Gentiles. It was enough for Moses to pronounce a curse upon him who moved his neighbour’s landmark, and it has ever since been held inviolate; while these idolaters, to ensure protection to the stones that bound their pro-



perty, convert them into Deities, and imagine that because their Gods have no feet they can never run away. Asses ! idiots ! barbarians !”

“ It is, indeed, a pitiable debasement in which these Pagans are sunk,” said Zillah ; “ but I wonder not that they are anxious to preserve their possessions, for truly they live in a perfect garden of Eden. Look around on all sides, my dear father ; saw you ever so fair, so sweet, so exquisite a landscape ?”

“ I do look around me, child ; and I behold nothing of all this,—nothing but desecration and horror,—nothing but what must be an abomination in the nostrils of the Lord. The beautiful earth is deflowered, the pure streams are violated, the groves are unhallowed, the great deep is defiled, the trees are polluted, the flowers are profaned, the fields are prostituted, the fountains are poisoned, the highways are contaminated, by their being all consecrated to

false deities,—all made a portion for devils and idols. Nay, have they not audaciously vilified the very heavens themselves, and done their utmost to unsanctify the glorious, the holy stars and planets, by bestowing upon them the names of hunters and harlots, murderers and monsters, tyrants and their minions, thieves, drunkards, dotards,—every thing that is base, contemptible, and odious? If their country be a paradise, the more monstrous their ingratitude towards Him who bestowed it upon them.”

“Driver! what is the name of the next town?” cried out Gabriel, who was always anxious to check these diatribes in the Sagan.

“Gnatia.”

“Has it a tolerably comfortable prison?”

“I am no criminal,” replied the man surlily. “*You* perhaps may have an interest in asking the question.”

“I think it highly probable that I shall have,”

continued Gabriel, addressing himself to the Sagan ; “ for verily, Rab Malachi, if you entertain such hostile feelings, and avow them thus indiscreetly and loudly in the presence of our driver, I think we may find another prison much sooner than we shall stumble upon another Prætor like the little none-such of Brundisium. I can feel the concealed jewels trembling and quaking every time that you open your mouth.”

“ I can be silent when necessary,” said the Sagan ; “ but I cannot speak of the barbarians otherwise than as I feel.”

“ I beseech you, then, to consider silence most necessary when you feel most disposed to break it.”

The Sagan folded his arms in his robe, let his beard fall over them, bent down his eyebrows, and held his peace, as if assenting to the proposition ; and little was said by his fellow-travellers till they reached the town mentioned

by the driver, which completed their day's journey, as they did not travel in the night-time. Here they first proved the validity of the Prætor's order, which, being instantly recognized, secured them accommodation at the principal inn :—and here too, in spite of all the cautions he had received, the irascible Sagan was on the very point of again compromising the safety of the whole party. The poet Horace, who travelled from Rome to Brundisium about the period of which we are writing, has recorded the infinite amusement afforded to himself and his incredulous companions by the boast of the Egnatians, that when frankincense was laid upon the altar of their temple, it was miraculously consumed without the help of fire. Anxious to exalt the honours of his native town, the communicative landlord eagerly related the same marvel to our travellers ; but the Sagan, instead of laughing at the fable, like the bard and his Epicurean companions, or accepting the advice

given to his own fellow-countryman Apella, commenced a furious diatribe against the fraudulent and lying priests ; which might have led to the most perilous results, had not Zillah instantly dismissed the landlord from the room ; while Gabriel succeeded at length in checking his kinsman's vituperative eloquence, or at least in giving it a new direction, by enquiring whether this was a proof that he could be silent when necessary.

“ Can flesh and blood,—can a Hebrew,—can a priest of God's chosen people, be calm and dumb,” he exclaimed, “ when these Pagans, like Jannes and Jambres, the magicians of Pharaoh, would impiously ape the prodigies of Moses ? The Heathen are perpetually stealing our miracles, while they refuse to embrace our faith. This is one of them. And when they tell us that the earth opened and swallowed up their false prophet Amphiaraus, is it not a manifest mimicry of the judgment by which Korah,

Dathan, and Abiram perished? Or when they feign that their hero Hercules was swallowed by a whale, remaining in its belly three days, and being disgorged at length with no other injury than the loss of his hair, is it not an impious mockery of Jonah's punishment? And their tale of Agamemnon sacrificing his daughter Iphigenia, is it not a profane parody upon Jephthah the Gileadite, who devoted his daughter to the Lord after his conquest of the Ammonites? Of such sacrilege their whole mythology is full. Strange, that they should thus audaciously pervert the wonders of the true God, and transfer them to the obscene deities of Polytheism!—Still more strange would it be if I could witness such abominations, and not visit the perpetrators with the outpourings of my indignation."

He spoke loud and angrily; for the wrath of this lion of Israel was generally kindled rather than allayed by lashing the heathen with his tongue: like the wind, he would talk himself

into a storm,—beginning with a whisper, and ending with thunder. His forehead grew red, his eyes flashed from beneath his knit brows, and the beard of his upper lip quivered in the angry breathings of his nose. In these chafing moods, Zillah knew that argument or persuasion served but to irritate him; wherefore she sate herself down by a window at a little distance, and, looking up at the sky, sang with her low, sweet, mellow, winning voice the forty-seventh Psalm. It must be recollected that these were the national songs of the Hebrews, addressed sometimes more immediately to their patriotic than even to their religious feelings, although generally calculated to awaken and exalt both.

“Selah!” ejaculated the Sagan, when she had concluded—“God is gone up with a shout, with the sound of a trumpet—He shall subdue the nations under our feet, Selah! Selah!—Kiss me, my child; neither Jeduthun, nor Asaph, nor the sons of Korah, nor the tuneful Miriam, nor



Jephthah's daughter, nor Jubal the father of music, ever made so dulcet, so soothing a melody as the voice of my Zillah. It has hushed up my heart and filled it with peace, even as the harp of David allayed the grief of Saul. Kiss me, my child, kiss me. They shall not chafe me thus,—Gentiles, Pagans, Heathen, blind idolaters though they be.”

Passing through Rubi, Canusium, and Equotuticum, the little town of which Horace was obliged to omit the name, because he could not insert it without violating the measure of his verse, our travellers, proceeding at the slow rate which was then customary, at length reached the Apulian mountains, up some of whose steep acclivities their horses could scarcely drag them, although the Appian road was in all parts broad and in admirable order. It was overhung on their right by high rugged crags, from whose summit sprang majestic oaks, which by sending down their solid gnarled roots

through the crevices, and over the surface of the rocks, into the soil, were enabled to soar up into the air like colossal towers of wood, imparting a solemnity, almost a fearfulness, to the gloom, as they stretched their gigantic arms athwart the road, in apparent readiness to strike down and crush the puny mortals who should dare to invade their domain. On the left, where the rocks were less precipitous, there were occasional openings into a deep unwooded valley ; and on this side had been dug a wide trench to carry off the rains, which, in such mountainous districts, soon accumulate into torrents, that require a channel to protect the roads from their devastations. While our travellers were toiling slowly up the steep, and had nearly reached the top, they heard voices hallooing eagerly to one another from the far side of the mountain, followed instantly by the hasty blast of a trumpet, which awakened sudden, sharp, threatening echoes from the surrounding rocks

and dells. The horses stopped of themselves, pointing their ears towards the sound ; and the face of the driver, as he looked earnestly in the same direction, betrayed alarm rather than surprise, for these heights were known to be occasionally infested by outlaws and banditti. A pause ensued, during which our travellers, afraid of unnecessarily exciting one another's apprehensions, maintained a hushed silence ; listening however, and looking anxiously around for an explanation of this ominous alarm. Presently the crashing of branches amid the underwood and rhododendrons that crowned every height, drew their attention to a lofty crag, a little way ahead of them, whence a man burst impetuously forth with a naked sword in his hand, and, throwing himself over the precipice upon a projecting ledge about half-way down, leaped thence like a mountain goat, uninjured, to the bottom.

Without losing a moment, he rushed towards

the carriage, and, seizing one of the horses by the bridle, began to hack asunder its traces with his weapon. The driver sate motionless, neither uttering a syllable, nor offering the least resistance; but Simon the Levite, hastily disengaging his sword from the scabbard, was preparing to leap out of the carriage, when the assailant, anticipating his purpose, exclaimed in an accent that betrayed him not to be a Roman—"Forbear! stir not a step, as you value your life and those of your companions. Molest me not, and I will not injure a hair of your head. Dare to oppose me, and I will instantly destroy you and your whole party!"—He swore not, he neither spoke loudly nor in anger, but there was a calm, terrible, desperate energy in his voice and look, impressive even to awfulness, that showed him resolved to be obeyed, or prepared to die on the spot.—"Sit quiet, Simon," said Gabriel, pulling him back into his seat,—“the robber speaks us fair; and, even were it otherwise,

heard you not the trumpets, the shouting of the gang? They will doubtless soon appear; and to offer resistance were but to provoke our fate."

"My child! my child!" exclaimed the Sagan, throwing his arms around his daughter—"why did I ever bring you among these barbarians? They shall not tear you from my arms. I will perish 'ere you shall be surrendered to the Pagans, the heathen, the idolaters."

"Be composed, my dear father! our danger may not be so imminent as you imagine: he has declared that he meditates no violence."

"Jehovah-jereh! the Lord will see!—but what trust can we put in a barbarian robber?"

The eyes of Zillah were riveted upon the figure who had thus strangely arrested their progress. He was light-haired, fair complexioned, tall of stature, but formed with beautiful symmetry; and, notwithstanding the frightful

scars with which his face was disfigured, its character was neither savage nor ferocious, but rather expressive of melancholy and a stern inflexibility of purpose. From his looks, his language, his proceedings, she believed him to be engaged in some desperate enterprise, although she knew not what; but he had been apparently too much accustomed to confront death to view the crisis with alarm, or with any other feeling than that of a collected, stern resolution to avoid his fate, if possible. Over his long white tunic he wore a brass cuirass, so battered and hacked, that Zillah could not decipher the name and number with which it was inscribed: his close skull-cap, of the same material, exhibited similar marks of hard service, and was encircled by a wreath, tied under the chin with a fillet. As he stooped to detach a portion of the harness, his garland fell from his head; and urgent, imminent as seemed to be his danger, he would not proceed in his purpose, until

he had replaced it. The horse he had selected was at length separated from the others, when he jumped upon its back, and, striking it sharply with the flat of his sword, urged it towards one of the openings on the left that led into the valley. Weakened with its previous exertions, the poor animal, in its attempt to leap over the trench, fell with great violence, and threw its rider upon the opposite bank, in such a manner that he was wounded with his own sword. The blood spouted from his body ; but the injury was either slighter than it seemed, or the crisis would not allow him to give heed to it, for he started nimbly upon his legs, and, running with prodigious velocity, was presently lost behind the rocks.

Scarcely had he disappeared, when the shouting of voices and the blast of a trumpet were again heard, succeeded by the trampling of hoofs at full speed ; and four armed horsemen, galloping up the opposite summit of the moun-



tain, relaxed not in their pace till they reached the carriage. The cut traces and the disabled horse awakening their suspicions of what had happened, they enquired of the driver, who pointed out the opening through which the fugitive had made his escape; when they dashed after him, cleared the trench without accident, and vanished behind the rocks, though their cries were heard at intervals, and more than once the loud twanging of a bow could be distinguished, as if they were shooting arrows at the object of their pursuit, and chasing him like a wild beast.

The unhappy fugitive, seeing no chance of concealment or escape in the valley, turned, again crossed the road at full speed through another opening towards the summit of the ascent, clambered up the opposite crags, inaccessible as they appeared to human feet, and was again as quickly out of sight as if an antelope had bounded athwart, and vaulted over the intervening rocks. The horsemen who held

him in close chace, dashed into the road as soon as he had disappeared; and discovering, by some footmarks, as well as by a few broken boughs, the direction he had taken, they shouted to their comrades. A blast of the trumpet, and six or eight dispersed halloos answered the signal, all sounding from that side of the mountain towards which the runaway had bent his flight. However favourable for concealment might be the rugged rocky heights, or the wooded hollows into which he had plunged, Zillah almost despaired of his escape; for his pursuers, who appeared to be numerous, seemed to have hemmed him in on every side, and her heart sunk within her at the apprehended certainty of his capture. Who or what he was she knew not, cared not; yet could she not refrain from praying, with the silence of her whole thrilling heart, that he might be saved. The terrible serenity of his fair scarred face, which seemed to have poured forth its blood in battle

till it had become pale and sad ; the stern composure of those eyes, around which the lightning of swords must so often have flashed ; his youth, his noble figure, the calm lion-like audacity of his demeanour, although surrounded by such a troop of mounted and armed pursuers ; the cruelty, the cowardice of thus hunting him down ;—all conspired to awaken a deep interest in his behalf, and to fill her with an involuntary abhorrence of his assailants. She listened with an intense anxiety, but every sound was for some time hushed. The solemn silent rocks on either side, the huge motionless trees, the tranquil smiling sky, of which she caught glimpses, here and there, through the giant boughs high, high overhead, bespoke such peace and gentleness in the midst of their mighty sublimity, that she could hardly imagine they would allow the sanctuary which they formed to be profaned by the bad passions of men, still less permit its holy precincts to be stained by blood.

As she gazed vaguely around her, listening rather than looking, she perceived something stealthily moving amid the foliage, midway up one of the prodigious oaks, scarcely twenty yards from their carriage. At first she conjectured it to be some wild creature, but another moment undeceived her. Yes, yes, it was he—the fugitive, holding his sword in his mouth and clambering up the oaken tower as if he had been fashioned by nature for the purpose, a clawed animal, a thing of the woods. Instantly averting her eyes, lest their gaze should direct others to the same spot, she fixed them upon the ground, and, clasping her hands, remained for some moments in an agony of suspense, almost afraid to breathe, and still more fearful of betraying her emotion. The shout of many voices, the clamour of a brazen-throated trumpet blowing a peal of triumph, and the hoarse cries of “Found ! found ! In the tree ! In the great oak !” revealed to her, that the object of

her deep solicitude was discovered ; and as she clung to her father, trembling with agitation, and uttering an involuntary sob of sympathetic anguish, she again cast up her eyes to see whether the poor wretch might not still possess some chance of escape.

Conscious as he must have been that he was discovered, he neither accelerated nor retarded his progress ; but, appearing to bestow no attention whatever upon the hubbub beneath him, and the numerous pursuers who were now all converging hastily towards the spot, he continued climbing up—up—up, till he had nearly gained the dizzy summit of the tree, where a leafless bare bough, apparently one that had been blasted by the lightning, shot itself into the giddy air, and stretched athwart the road. Along this crazy, fearful perch he began to crawl upon his hands and knees, still holding the sword in his mouth. The branch trembled—it swayed to and fro—it bent with his weight.

Zillah shut her eyes with a shudder ; she tried even to stop her ears, expecting every moment to hear the appalling crash, the death-shriek—the horrible signal that he was precipitated from that terrific height, and dashed to atoms upon the rocks.

As nothing indicated the catastrophe she had anticipated, she again ventured to look up. Still retaining the wreath around his helmet, he had now seated himself at the forked extremity of the bough, with his face towards the tree ; and brandishing his sword in his right hand, poised in mid air, swinging between heaven and earth, like a wounded eagle upon his eyry, he seemed resolved to await his assailants upon the perilous field of battle that he had chosen for himself. Zillah was at a loss to account for some small object that kept momentarily glistening in the sunshine beneath him and losing itself in the shade, until a plashing sound drew her eyes to the road be-

low, where she beheld a crimson circle formed by the continual dropping of his blood! Her previous sympathy with the sufferer was hardly capable of increase, but her indignation against his ruthless pursuers was not a little inflamed at this pitiable sight.

By this time the horsemen, descending from the brow of the mountain, stood together under the tree, as if waiting for orders; while several of their comrades on foot successively made their appearance, and stationed themselves around the oak, without offering to climb it. After a short interval, a huge, ferocious, ruffian-like fellow, holding a trumpet in one hand, and a sword in the other, came out of the bushes, puffing and panting, to the spot, and immediately began to issue orders, as if he were the leader of the party. "Shall I bring him down with an arrow?" asked one of the horsemen, adjusting his bow; "he is a dead shot as he sits now, and we shall never catch



him otherwise, unless we wait till he drops out of the tree from hunger."

"At your peril, sirrah!" bawled the leader, shaking his sword at the fellow who had made the proposition. "He is my best man—worth any two of ye. Besides, haven't I entered him, and been paid the deposit, for the great match at Capua, and the festival of Jupiter at Beneventum? No, no, we must fetch the rascal down without hurting him. Let's see—let's see." Going out into the road for the purpose of taking a more exact observation of the fugitive's position, he began to shake and scratch his head, muttering to one of his companions, "Shouldn't mind putting an arrow into him myself, if he weren't up so high, so desperate high. Wing him as delicately as you will, the fall is sure to spoil him. Ugly job! Then if I send up after him, no use; the chap is no flincher—will never have a thumb pointed at him—will fight till all the flesh is hacked off

his bones. Besides, the bough won't hold two—shall lose 'em both:—'twould cost a good round sum to replace 'em. Coax him down—coax him down."

Raising his coarse rough voice so as to be heard by the man in the tree, he endeavoured to wheedle him down by the most solemn promises of granting him his freedom after the Jupiter festival at Beneventum, winking at the same time to his companion, and swearing in an under-tone, that the runaway rogue should be effectually prevented from repeating this prank, if he could only get him safely into his clutches. His fawning, yet hoarse loud voice, and the villanous savage chuckle of his under-tone, as he sneered at the credulity of the dupe he thought himself about to cajole, offered a singular contrast to the foreign accent, but clear, resolute, honest intonation of his intended victim.—“ You have already repeatedly

made me the same promise, and have as often violated your vow," said the latter.

"True, but I mean to keep it now. By Castor and Pollux, I do! (Say any thing to get the rascal out of the tree.)"

"Have you any objection to dip your two hands in what you have so long lived by—my blood;—there is plenty of it on the ground beneath;—to lift them up to Heaven, and swear by Hercules to give me my discharge after the festival of Beneventum?"

"Any objection?—not I—none in the world. (A lie more or less cannot make any great odds, so here goes.)" He advanced to the little pool of blood, and was stooping to fulfil the stipulation, when the wretched fugitive, rendered desperate by the manifest impossibility of his escape, knowing by sad experience that the most solemn oaths of his villanous master were utterly unworthy of credit, and resolved to

inflict a richly merited punishment upon his oppressor, while he got rid of his own miserable existence at the same time, had no sooner decoyed him under the tree than he threw himself headlong down upon him from his fearful eyry in the sky, and both were instantly dashed to pieces on the flinty pavement of the Appian road.

## CHAPTER V.

THE miserable man who had inflicted this suicidal revenge was a German prisoner of war, sold as a slave, and purchased by the itinerant proprietor of a company of Gladiators, who travelled about the country with his troop, exhibiting them at fairs and festivals in the provincial towns, sometimes for such money as he could collect from the people at the time of performance, but more often being paid a round sum by the magistrates, or by some candidate for popular favour, who knew he could not more effectually ingratiate himself with the mob, than by treating them with a spectacle

of this nature. The strength, beauty, and symmetry of the captive, pointing him out as peculiarly qualified for a Gladiator, his master had bought him with this express view, and immediately began to instruct him in all the cruel science of his trade, promising him that when he had proved victorious in a certain number of combats, he should receive his manumission, and be at liberty to return to his native country. No other stimulus was necessary to inflame all his great energies—to give him the heart of a lion, and almost the strength of a Hercules ; for he had left parents, a wife, children, and a cherished home in the beloved land of his birth. In the hope of revisiting, of regaining all that rendered life valuable ; in the firm resolution of dying, if he did not accomplish this great object of his soul, his mighty spirit imparted such a preternatural vigour to his nimble and athletic body, that he became absolutely invincible ;

and although his face and chest were ploughed with scars in the desperate process, he at length performed the cruel task that had been set him. But alas ! instead of cutting off his chains with his sword, it had been converted into a tool for riveting them the faster. By achieving fame, he had lost all hope of liberty. He had become celebrated, popular by his exploits ; they gave a preference to the troop in which he fought, raised its value in the market of blood ; he was called for by name, always received with acclamations at the different towns where the company exhibited ; and his sordid, heartless, ruffianly master, unwilling to relinquish the great profit he derived from him, instead of redeeming his solemn pledge, continually deluded him with fresh promises of freedom, promises which were as regularly violated as the old ones, when his wretched victim had lavished his blood in a new victory. There was a law, indeed, which entitled the man to



his discharge ; but the law has in all ages been rather a security for the rich, than a protection for the poor. A slave with an empty purse, and in the power of an unprincipled master, had no means of enforcing his right ; and the defrauded Gladiator was obliged to content himself with such paltry distinctions as were granted to him in the hope of soothing his present disappointment, while he was still lured on and deluded with renewed promises, pledges, and even oaths for the future. His name, and the number of his victories were engraved upon his cuirass ; a wreath of triumph was bound around his helmet. Cherishing these badges as evidences of his prowess, as proofs that he had nobly done his duty, and was entitled to his discharge, he still fought on with a trusting and undaunted heart. But when accident discovered to him that his inhuman master laughed at his credulity, called him a barbarian, which he seemed to think a sufficient excuse for every

treachery, and confessed that he never meant to set him free, but to keep him till he was cut down and slaughtered like a beast in the arena, his brave indignant heart, the heart of the affectionate son, husband, and father, was instantly goaded to desperation, and he resolved to seize the first opportunity of escape. While the guard, who always travelled with the troop, were refreshing themselves at an inn amid the mountains of Apulia, he contrived to disengage himself from his comrades, got possession of a sword, and plunged into the woods. The tragical issue of this attempt we have already detailed. Resolved from the very first never to be retaken alive, which was his principal motive for securing the sword, he had evinced the calm of desperation throughout the whole proceeding. When he saw that escape was impracticable, he became solely anxious to wreak his revenge upon his perjured oppressor ; and succeeding in this, his last object upon earth,

we may excuse him if we imagine that his death, terrible as it was, was not without a touch of savage sweetness at the thought that he died as he had lived, in triumphing over his enemies.\*

Our travellers were soon in a condition to proceed, for the driver delighted to find that the party were not robbers, and, utterly indifferent to a matter of such common occurrence as the death of a Gladiator, again tackled the lame horse to the carriage, and went slowly for-

\* There are few anecdotes upon the subject of Gladiators more affecting than one recorded by Tacitus. At a most extensive engagement of this nature given by the Emperor Claudius, the combatants, as they marched before him in solemn procession, previously to the conflict, saluted him with this melancholy greeting. "Ave, Imperator; morituri te salutant!" "Avete vos!" was the answer, which the poor wretches would have gladly interpreted into an act of favour, and a grant of their lives; but the crowned barbarian soon gave them to understand that it proceeded only from a heartless levity and insensibility.

ward. Zillah, not yet recovered from her terror and deep agitation at the catastrophe she had witnessed, kept her eyes closed till they began to descend the other side of the mountain, when she opened them in the hope that the smiling, benignant face of Nature might tranquillise her harrowed feelings. But they were again doomed to be lacerated, though not to so painful an excess; for they had not advanced far when they encountered the caravan belonging to the troop, having a large board in front of it, whereon was rudely painted a gladiatorial combat in all its most savage and revolting circumstances, the names and character of the respective performers being inscribed beneath. This was usually set up in the Forum, or market-place, of the country towns, to attract the attention of the inhabitants, while it was affixed to the waggon to answer the same purpose with the passengers whom they might meet while travelling. A poor gashed gladiator, his

clothes discoloured with blood, dragged himself slowly up from the lumber, arms, and weapons amid which he lay extended at the bottom of the vehicle, to gaze at the travellers, his languid eyes flaring up, and his haggard wan countenance assuming a reckless desperate expression that was meant for fortitude, as with all his ruffian pride he strove to rise superior to pain and wounds. His comrades, who were walking beside or behind the caravan, wore looks of innate ferocity, as if they were natural cut-throats, and followed their bloodthirsty calling from choice rather than compulsion ; and when they learned from the driver the catastrophe that had occurred, their ribald levity was in every respect worthy of the brutalising school in which they had been educated. The wounded wretch attempted to mingle in their revolting jokes ; but it was a miserable, loathsome failure, the contortions of his ghastly features when he strove to laugh, and the hollow, sepulchral anguish of

his voice when he affected merriment, presenting a combination of every thing that was hideous and unnatural.

“The horrors of these barbarian practices,” said the Sagan, as his party gladly moved forward and lost sight of the caravan, “should endear to us the more the superior civilisation and humanity of our own country—of the chosen people lifted up, by God himself, in the early ages of the world, out of the savageness, filth, and idolatry in which all the other nations of the earth were then wallowing, even as they still are at this hour. Have we not seen bands of slaves, as we travelled, chained together, and led out with stripes and blows to toil in the fields? They, like many of the gladiators, are prisoners, the fruits of the wars which these barbarians carry on perpetually against the whole earth; but this universal oppression is not unavenged, even in the midst of their victories, and in the heart of their own country. The tyrant



whom many fear, must inevitably fear many : so must a nation of tyrants ; and behold, these conquerors who triumph over every thing abroad, live in constant dread at home ; the sacrificers are afraid of their victims. Nature will make efforts to right herself ; these slaves and gladiators, rising upon their oppressors and forming themselves into a vast desperate army, have sometimes put Rome herself in peril of that exterminating retribution, from the apprehension of which, even when all around her seems to be peace and abject submission, she never is, never can be, for a single moment free. Raca ! the idolatress ! may the hot swift judgment overtake her ! may the trumpet of the destroyer send a terrible sound through all her streets—may the voices of men be no longer heard in them, nor the music of harps, nor the songs of mirth ; may the mill-stones cease to grind, and the light of her candles go out for ever, and the dominion which she has usurped be given to



the Israelites as an everlasting inheritance ! Hosanna ! Glory to the Lord."

"Amen ! Selah !" ejaculated Simon the Levite, drawing himself up in the carriage with a look of fierce devotion, and placing his right hand on the pommel of his sword.

"Nay, I have no objection to contribute my own hearty Amen to any philippic that is thus pronounced in Hebrew," said Gabriel ;—"but I warn you once more, Rab Malachi, not to slip into Latin when you are in these moods, especially in the hearing of our driver, or you may be tumbled down in the midst of your exaltation, like the poor Gladiator, without the satisfaction of crushing your enemy in your fall."

The distance from Brundisium to Rome was only about three hundred and sixty miles, and yet Horace and his companions, although the fate of the empire depended upon their journey, since they went for the purpose of reconciling Octavius and Antony, consumed

fourteen days upon the road. Our travellers were rather more expeditious ; the Sagan, however, found frequent reason to complain of the tediousness of their progress, and always discovered some fresh excuse for a peevish and indiscreet abuse of the Pagans, which term, with its synonymes, were the only names he would ever bestow upon the Roman nation.

As they advanced, the country became more populous, more richly cultivated, more thickly interspersed with villages, and the picturesque villas of rich proprietors, the approach to which was generally betrayed by the statues scattered through the grounds, enshrined within open alcoves or arbours, or pedestalled beneath lofty trees, as if they were standing in the shade to rest their beautiful limbs, as they contemplated the calm landscape outspread before them. To our travellers, these delightful villas, appearing to need no other guard than the bowers in which they were embosomed, afforded a certain

evidence of the security of the country ; and gave it an advantage, which even the Sagan could not deny, over their native land, where the frequency of civil troubles or foreign inroad compelled the wealthy and the great to confine themselves within the walls of fortified towns. Upon almost every height some noble pile, its white marble pediment and projecting columns thrown forward by the shade behind, or by the contrast of the green groves around them, looked forth with a Doric grandeur, a sublime simplicity, as if it were the natural guardian of the tranquil, smiling district that surrounded it. Sometimes a smoke was seen to ascend from the altar in front, and a procession of white-robed priests and varicoloured peasants, following their garlanded victim, would be caught for a moment, and then veiled by the intervening foliage. However gratifying might be such a sight to the inhabitants, in whose eyes it combined all the attractions of architectural beauty,

delicious scenery, and religious feeling, to the Sagan it was mere hideousness, sacrilege, and sore abomination: nor were his angry feelings soothed when, upon enquiring of Gabriel the meaning of the torches, tridents, and eagles stamped upon the dresses of the herdsmen, as well as upon the sides of the fat, sleek cattle pasturing around these buildings, he was informed that the animals were intended for sacrifice; and that the badges or brands attested them to belong to the respective temples of Diana, Neptune, and Jupiter. "Hebrew!" ejaculated Gabriel, after giving him this explanation. "I perceive, by the bristling of your upper lip, that you are about to anathematise; and I bespeak Hebrew, according to your promise, giving you free use of all the letters from Aleph to Tau."

Although the Sagan was irritated at what he considered the misplaced levity of his kinsman, he complied with his advice, and in good set

Hebrew, wished that the curse pronounced by Noah upon Canaan and his posterity, by Jacob upon his sons Simeon and Levi, by Moses upon the violators of the Law, by Joshua upon those who should rebuild Jericho, together with all those uttered by the priests who stood in the valley between the hills Ebal and Gerizem, might fall upon these besotted idolaters, if they did not speedily abjure their errors and turn to the only true faith.

“Amen, Selah!” exclaimed Simon, again drawing himself upright, and looking very fierce and fervent. After communing, however, for some time with his own thoughts, apparently not quite satisfied with the fiat he had pronounced, he continued: “And yet, master, there are some redeeming points about these poor benighted Heathen. Every where I see that the noblest buildings, the richest pastures, the finest and the fattest cattle belong to the priests, which could not be unless there was

much real religion among the people. After all, they are not so bad as some of our Sadducees, who are very apt to boggle about the payment of their tithes. Ah ! we must go to the Pharisees if we want true piety : they are our best tithe-payers."

They were now approaching Anxur, a town situated upon a rocky steep overhanging the sea. The craggy eminence, surmounted by the Temple of the beardless Jupiter, exhibiting some little resemblance to the Holy City, ingratiated it in the eyes of those who were delighted to be reminded of Jerusalem, however remote or even fanciful might be the similarity, and however repugnant in general might be the sight of a Pagan temple. On their right lay outstretched the sea, blooming in the rich mellow tints of evening ; and on their left was a long narrow valley, overgrown with wild olive and mulberry trees, and intersected by a streamlet, which, as it wound its own circuitous way to the ocean,



was sometimes hidden by the underwood, sometimes was seen rippling along, burnished by the rays of the setting sun. Zillah was gazing listlessly in this direction, when her attention was attracted by the sound of a sudden sharp plunge into the stream; and lo! in the midst of the shallow flashing waters, she beheld Esau, the wild man of the mountains, on the same beautiful black Arabian, which she had seen him bestride at Solomon's Well, the sun-light shining through the transparent red nostrils of the animal, and both horse and rider so emblazoned by the sparkling particles dashed upwards from the stream, and showering down again in the bright sloping rays of the sun, that, as they vaulted forward and were lost amid the trees almost as suddenly as they had appeared, she could hardly help imagining she had been deluded by some flitting apparition, the joint product of fire and water, conjured up, like an *ignis fatuus*, by the influence of a hot evening



sun upon a marshy soil. The foam left upon the agitated surface of the stream, however, dispelled this momentary fancy, and every doubt of the identity of the figure was removed by Gabriel, who, having caught a glimpse of it, eagerly exclaimed—"Hishtommoth ! lo ! look ! it is the stranger—the wearer of the ruby, the miraculous jewel that would put out the eyes of Solomon's ring, or make it turn white with envy ! Where did he get it ? Not all the merchants in the street Maktesh could furnish such another. Stop, driver, stop ! I will deal with him, I will chaffer, I will purchase—but where is he gone ? whither has he vanished ? Adonoye ! we have lost him again. He has suddenly become invisible ! The Lord be with us !" —In the agitation of the moment he spoke in Hebrew, so that the driver, not understanding him, paid no attention to his exclamations. The slow rate, however, at which they were proceeding, would have allowed them abundant

time for observing the figure that had thus flitted before their eyes, had it again emerged from the covert; but all remained still among the tall bushes and underwood of the valley; they saw him no more. “O that his horse would serve him as Mephibosheth was treated by his nurse!” exclaimed Gabriel: “O that he were an Enosh, a fallen man, and that I could once catch a glimpse of him dismounted from the four-footed spirit that whisks him away like a meteor,—I would never quit him till —Tell me, Zillah, was it the sun-light and the bright waters that flashed about him, or was he not rather irradiated, emblazed by the effulgence of his own ring?—Ah! the road turns away from the valley—we have lost him for ever! Verily, Rab Malachi, no pontifical breast-plate, even when its jewels were burning under the influence of the Urim and Thummim, ever boasted so bright, so fiery a gem as this ruby of the stranger.”

“ Gabriel of Michmash ! speak not thus irreverently of the miraculous jewels of the Pectoral. Was this the traveller whom we saw at Solomon’s Well, and mounted on the same Arabian steed ?”

“ Ay, it was even he, and wearing, I doubt not, the same blazing star upon his finger.”

“ Truly, this is strange !” ejaculated the Sagan, crossing his arms within his robe, and leaning back in the carriage, as if to fold himself up in his own thoughts.

“ Strange ? it is marvellous, portentous ! Heaven send that it bode us no mischief !”

“ We are three to one,” said Simon : “ if he have no arrows, I value him not a jot ; for though I am a Levite, he shall find that I have been of the Temple Guard, and know how to handle my sword ; that is, if he be a man of flesh and blood, unpossessed of devils, and a fair fighter. But if he be a sorcerer or a spirit,

and wear upon his finger the magical ring of Solomon —— ”

“ Vah ! Booshoh he ! ” ejaculated the Sagan, with a look of displeasure. Simon held his peace, and the party spoke not more till they entered the town of Anxur. Zillah’s thoughts, however, were busy within her, for the unexpected apparition of Esau had filled her with a thousand vague surmises, though none offered a satisfactory, or even a plausible solution of the mystery that seemed to be attached to him. Momentary as was the glance she obtained of him, she observed that he had discarded his half-armour, and adopted what appeared to be the dress of a Roman knight. She fancied, too, that he had seen, and even recognised her ; but why he should thus haunt her, why follow her movements through Palestine, and even into a foreign country, especially as he made no attempt to gain speech of her, or to push their

acquaintanceship beyond a midnight serenade, remained not less inexplicable than the different disguises he had assumed, and the wild, incoherent, and yet passionate speeches that he had addressed to her in their first encounterings. In his night-song at Solomon's Well, he had intimated that his heart would follow her, whithersoever she might roam ; an averment which she had considered at the time as a mere amatory effusion, or unmeaning compliment. But that he should track her in person ; cross the great sea ; traverse Italy ; transport his horse with him, and be enabled to keep her in view when and how he wished—for he seemed to possess this strange power—baffled her apprehensions, and excited her curiosity not less keenly as to his motives, than as to his real name, character, and station.

Renewing their journey at an early hour on the following morning, they soon reached the Temple and Fountain of Feronia ; a goddess

who presided over woods and groves, and the appropriate patroness of a district, which seemed to be thickly planted in all directions. Here they were informed by their driver, that if they preferred water-carriage, they might be conveyed from that neighbourhood to Forum Appii, about fifty miles from Rome, by the canal which traversed the Pontine lake and marshes. He added, that a large barge, drawn by mules, and provided with abundant accommodation for travellers, would take its departure in an hour or two, which would transport them quite as quickly as they could travel by land, and with much less fatigue; since the Appian road had been somewhat neglected in these parts, in consequence of the preference generally given to the canal. Already fatigued with so many days' jolting, and anxious to enjoy the comparative ease of a conveyance by water, they willingly assented to the man's proposition. They dismounted, therefore, and taking a coun-

tryman with them for their guide, began to walk through the groves and meadows towards the place of embarkation, while the carriage went round by the road, which was much more circuitous than the footpath, to carry their luggage to the same spot.

As soon as they had reached the place of embarkation, they found that it was necessary they should immediately go on board the barge to secure their passage. This they accordingly did; the carriage soon afterwards made its appearance, when their luggage was carefully secured in the hold. At the signal of a bell, the other passengers, who were lounging or chatting together upon the wharf, jumped on board; two mules were harnessed to the towing-rope, the muleteer plied his whip; and our travellers, who had been so long jolting over the stones, and passing through such diversified scenery, found themselves gliding lazily along a canal, which seldom afforded them a better prospect



than meadows or marshes on one side, and their old acquaintance, the Appian road, on the other, now taking a straight, unvaried line across the level country.

It was late before they reached Forum Appii, not a little rejoiced at escaping from the buzzing of innumerable gnats, the loud, harsh croaking of the fenny frogs, and the dissonant braying of the mules, who scented their resting-place from afar off, and testified their satisfaction after a most unmusical fashion. The sounds, however, with which the passengers were greeted, upon their arrival, were scarcely of a more melodious nature ; for the vintners, boatmen, sailors, publicans, and slaves, who were assembled at the landing-place, offered their respective services with such eagerness, that a vociferous squabble ensued, which reminding Zillah of their noisy landing at Brundisium, confirmed her opinion as to the scurrilous ferocity of the lower orders. Gabriel at length

made way for his companions through the clamorous mob by which they were beleaguered, and conducted them to a large and handsome inn, where they passed the night.

## CHAPTER VI.

AT an early hour on the following morning they resumed their journey; the warrant with which they had been furnished by the Brun-  
dusian Prætor having procured for them a well-appointed carriage, with three powerful and spirited horses, who whisked them forward, over the level Appian road, with a speed to which they had hitherto been unaccustomed. Having rested and refreshed at the Three Taverns, they passed through the ancient town of Aricia, and entering the forest of the same name, viewed with admiration the venerable and gigantic trees on either side, which looked as if

they had reared their proud heads high into the air when the foundation-stones of Rome were still slumbering in the dark quarry. One aged oak attracted their particular attention, not only from its stupendous size and venerable appearance, but from the peculiar honours that were evidently paid to it, the trunk being hung round with votive wreaths, while the lower boughs were festooned with garlands. Their driver could not tell them the cause of this especial reverence. But, however Zillah's feelings might revolt from the superstition in which it originated, she could not contemplate without emotion this type of blooming infancy clinging around the neck of hoary age—this union of Nature's most evanescent and most durable productions—of the ephemeral violet, with a time-defying oak, which, seeming to be coeval with the earth and sky, had, perhaps, in the infancy of the world been climbed by some naked savage, when he ran shrieking from the pursuit of

the wild beasts, who then held undisputed dominion over the fancied lords of the creation.

Several openings had been cut through the forest, either for the purposes of the chace, or to facilitate the conveyance of timber from the interior recesses to the high road; and most of these green alleys afforded glimpses of sylvan scenery, so diversified in their natural features, or by the contrasted effects of light and shadow, that our travellers, anxious as they were to complete their journey, were regretting the rapid progress that only allowed them a passing glance at these picturesque vistas, when the quick motion of the carriage was checked, with an abrupt jerk that almost threw them from their seats. Without any apparent cause for their restiveness and terror, the horses had suddenly stopped of themselves, shrinking tremblingly backward with cowering tail, or rearing and plunging with erected mane, dilated eyes, throbbing nostrils, swelling veins, and ears

pointed towards the forest. While the amazed travellers were gazing eagerly around them, utterly at a loss to account for this irrepressible panic, the tremendous roar of a wild beast burst upon their thrilling ears,—a roar that seemed to shake the very depths of the forest, and which after sweeping athwart the surface of a little lake on one side of the road, was hollowly reverberated from the rocky heights at its extremity. This appalling sound aggravated the terror of the animals into instant agony and madness. One of them leaped, screaming, into the air with such violence, that he broke away from the vehicle, and no sooner found himself at liberty than he vaulted into the lake, and swam, snorting, towards the opposite side: the second plunged furiously till he was also disengaged, when he galloped back towards Aricia with the speed of lightning: the third, utterly overcome and powerless with terror, sunk trembling down upon its haunches, as if

anxious to creep under the carriage for protection.

“ Oh my father ! my dear father ! some terrible wild beast is upon us ! ” cried Zillah, instinctively throwing herself before the Sagan, as if to protect him, and looking wildly around to discover whence their assailant would spring upon them.

“ Adonoye ! the Lord be with us ! ” ejaculated the parent, clasping his child in his arms.

“ Even if we were in a den of lions,” cried Simon, hastily drawing his sword, “ the God of Daniel may protect us. Let us all sit still, and I will receive the savage beast upon the point of my weapon.”

“ Hist ! hist ! lo, behold ! what apparition is this ? ” faltered Gabriel, who had also drawn his sword, pointing towards one of the green alleys of the forest. All eyes were instantly turned in this direction, when the travellers be-



held a spectacle, which, although it dissipated in some degree their immediate terrors, wrapped up all their faculties in utter bewilderment. An open car, drawn by two enormous lions, and preceded by laurelled Lictors, was seen slowly advancing from one of the woody avenues towards the high road. A man was seated within it, whose graceful length of beard, large forehead, aquiline nose, and noble dignity of countenance, imparted to him a commanding aspect, that might almost justify the presumption of his vestments, which were in obvious imitation of the garb of Hercules. Beside him sat a beautiful, but wanton and voluptuous-looking female, sparkling with jewels, and flaunting in splendid habiliments, her superb golden ringlets enwreathed with flowers, and her naked, round, alabaster arm hanging over the side of the car, though she forgot not to shade it with a little canopy of peacocks' feathers, that answered the purpose of a pa-

rasol. Both parties were laughing loudly and heartily. Another vehicle followed, drawn by mules ; and several horsemen accompanied them, whose animals, having probably been trained to endure the society of the lions, betrayed not the smallest terror at their presence. They were, indeed, obviously quite tame, although one of them had given the terrific roar, of which we have already detailed the effects, both upon our travellers and their scattered team.

The merriment of the parties in the car, the gay, joyous air of their companions, more of whom, successively, emerged from the wood, and the manifest docility of the lions, had quickly allayed the apprehensions of the Hebrews ; but their amazement remained unmitigated, until it suddenly occurred to Gabriel, that the spectacle was, perhaps, some mythological mummary ; and he instantly mentioned his conjecture, for the purpose of dissipating

any misgivings that might lurk in the minds of his fellow-travellers. Simon, however, was by no means inclined to sheathe his weapon, which he still brandished with a stern and watchful look, as if determined not to be taken by surprise. Meanwhile the car advanced into the road, and the female, laughing more immoderately than ever at the menacing, or rather the defensive attitude of the Levite, addressed the travellers in the intervals of her merriment ; her bold stare, meretricious aspect, and Amazonian garb, consorting but ill with the fair delicacy of her form, and the mincing lisp that she affected in her speech. “ Strangers, I thank you. By Hercules ! I never laughed so heartily in my life : we saw your accident from the beginning : was it not irresistibly droll ? I thought the horses would have kicked your vehicle to atoms, and I made sure that I should find some of you killed upon the spot. Ha ! ha ! ha !—Pyttalus ! give me my cinnamon-

drops. I can really laugh no more, I have such a pain in my side.—You are foreigners, I see. Of what country? whence come you? whither are you going?—were you not terribly frightened? Ha! ha!—Oh, my side! I shall die!—What did you take us for at first? you are strangers, or you would have surely known that this is Mark Antony. Is he not immensely like Hercules; and they say I have a look of Omphale?—Ah! there is one of your horses, I see; yonder, he has swum across the lake. Ha! ha! I wonder what has become of the other.—You stare at me, you don't know me—I thought all the world knew Volumnia. But you are foreigners.—Some more drops, Pyttalus!”

Taking advantage of the first pause that had occurred in this “bald, disjointed chat,” the Sagan stood up in the carriage, and surveying, with a severe dignity of aspect, the pretty wanton, whose profession he seemed to suspect,

said—"Lady, it is true that we are strangers newly arrived in your country, and unacquainted with the manners of the Romans; but you must excuse me, if I hesitate to believe that Mark Antony, the illustrious Triumvir, whose noble office it should be to set a decorous example, and watch over the safety of the people, would wander thus disguised about the public roads, drawn by wild beasts, who might endanger the lives of his dearest friends, as they have most unwarrantably perilled ours."

A peal of laughter from the whole disorderly assemblage, in which Antony himself heartily joined, followed this unintended rebuke; for the Sagan, concluding the assertions of the frail beauty to be mere cajolery and banter, dreamed not that Mark Antony was really before him. As soon as the sounds of merriment had subsided, Volumnia, who had learned mimicry and buffoonery in her original profession of an actress, stood up in the car, and suddenly discarding

her former lisp and manner, while she assumed, with a wonderful felicity, the gestures, voice, and foreign accent of the Sagan, addressed a solemn admonition to her paramour, warning him, with a burlesque gravity, of the consequences that must inevitably ensue from his debauched life, and from his associating with such profligate companions; mentioning by name those who then stood around the car, sketching their characters with the most caustic and yet ludicrous raillery; and stating in conclusion, with an air of increased solemnity, that he had but one really honourable, upright and disinterested friend in the whole circle of his acquaintance, which was no other than the chaste, the virtuous, and the discreet Volumnia!"

Acclamations and fresh shouts of laughter testified the complete success of this sally; and Antony, who delighted in every species of buffoonery, who enjoyed the palpable be-

wilderment of the strangers, and was instantly smitten with the charms of Zillah, would willingly have prolonged the scene; but Volumnia had no sooner marked the fixed direction of his fascinated eye, than with a jealous alarm she cried out, "On, Lictors, on! lead forward the lions. We have seen enough of these bearded strangers and their barbarian girl. Slaves! do ye hear me? Forward, I say!" Forgetting her affected lisp, as well as her mimicry of the Sagan, she spoke naturally, and therefore sharply and imperiously; while her jewelled sandal flashed in the sun as she struck it impatiently on the footboard of the car.

As the procession moved away, and again turned into the forest, Antony looked significantly at Pyttalus, one of his attendants, cast his eyes towards Zillah, and bowing a silent farewell to the travellers, soon disappeared amid the trees.

Although it is presumed that few readers can



be unfamiliar with the fact, it may be necessary to apprise such as are less conversant with the history of the period, that when Antony and Octavius began to quarrel about the dominion of the world, their first differences had been reconciled by the mediation of their common friends; and that, for the purpose of ratifying this treaty of amity, Antony married Octavia, the half-sister of his competitor. But this convention, originating in political expediency, rather than in any sincere attachment on either side, exercised but a fleeting influence on the ambitious and ungovernable temperament of Antony, whom the most trivial occurrences had power to irritate, and whose superstitious credulity aggravated his fears and suspicions. An Egyptian astrologer, whom he kept in his house, and who was skilled in the calculation of nativities, assured him that the star of his fortune, however glorious in itself, was eclipsed and obscured by that of Octavius Cæsar, advising

him by all means to keep at the greatest distance from his young competitor. Several trifling incidents seemed to warrant and confirm the prediction ; for in every kind of play together, whether they cast lots or dice, whether they engaged in cock or quail-fights, Antony was still the loser, Cæsar ever victorious. Under the influence of these sinister presages, Antony's hatred of his rival returned with redoubled force ; and, in obedience to the warnings of the wizard, he prepared to leave Italy, and return to his own government in the East. Octavia in the mean while, whom he now began to view rather as the sister of his rival, than as his own wife, was treated with marked neglect, if not with open insult. Such was the posture of affairs, when accident again threw in his way one of his discarded mistresses—a beautiful courtesan, who, having been originally a slave and an actress, had acquired an infamous celebrity, under the various appellations of Cy-

theris, Lycoris, and Volumnia ; which last name she had assumed on being made free, after having ministered for some time to the pleasures of her patron Volumnius. As illustrative of the manners of the Romans at the period of which we are writing, it may be mentioned, that Cornelius Gallus, the poet, wrote four books of amatory poems upon the subject of this abandoned woman,—that his friend Virgil, in his tenth Eclogue, endeavoured to comfort him when she quitted him for Mark Antony,—that Ovid declares her name to have been famous from east to west,—that Cicero, in one of his epistles, records his having dined in company with her at the house of Volumnius ; and in his second Philippic, indignantly stigmatises the pomp and splendour with which Antony, in his public progresses through Italy, carried her about with him,—and finally, that Pliny, at a subsequent period, noticing his thus openly riding with her in a chariot drawn by lions, says, that it was

beyond all the prodigies of those calamitous times.

A desire to mortify and insult Octavius in the person of his sister, rather than any renovation of his passion for Volumnia, had induced Antony to revive one of those foolish freaks, by which he had previously rendered himself notorious, and to parade her about in a car drawn by tame lions. Claiming to be descended from Hercules, he affected upon all occasions to imitate the garb of that hero: it was thus attired, and accompanied by some of the parasites, profligates, and buffoons, whom he ever loved to see about him, that he had been wandering around the purlieus of his hunting-seat in the Aricinian forest, when he had encountered our travellers, and maddened their horses with the terror of his formidable lions.

Perilous as might have been the consequences of their panic, it had appeared an excellent joke, and a fit subject for immoderate laughter to the

coarse-minded Antony and his reckless companions, although the merriment of the former had subsided into sudden and passionate admiration of Zillah, when he came near enough to discern the full splendour of her charms ; and they had seldom appeared so perfect and brilliant as at that very moment. The ruffled swan puts forth a more startling and transcendant beauty ; and Zillah's agitation, by kindling a brighter radiance in her magnificent eyes, and imparting a bloom to her cheeks which they did not habitually wear, had presented, in conjunction with her stately figure, a combination of attractions, which to the inflammable temperament of Antony had proved absolutely irresistible. Intractable as he was in general, his amorous constitution had always rendered him the slave of his wives and concubines ; and even in the presence of Cytheris, the favourite only of the passing hour, he was fearful of betraying his sudden passion for the beautiful Jewess. A significant glance, however, to

Pyttalus, one of his parasites, having sufficiently revealed his wishes, the minion remained behind, for the purpose of discovering the name, quality, and destination of the fair stranger, that he might forward the ulterior designs of his patron, of which he quickly guessed the nature, and the accomplishment of which, in all similar cases, it was part of his established duty to facilitate.

Pyttalus was a wily Greek, who, under the ostensible profession of a domestic physician, dwelt in Antony's house, and enacted the various parts of pimp, flatterer, sophist, musician, butt and buffoon, which latter were indispensable requisites in all candidates for the special favour of the Triumvir. Although the Greek possessed some share of the national comeliness, the sallowness of his complexion, and the expression of his countenance, rendered his face any thing rather than attractive. A crafty suppressed sneer flickered perpetually about the corners of his mouth, and his sly, sleepy-look-

ing eyes were generally half shut, as if he feared, by opening them, to betray his secret purposes—a drowsy character, however, which was only imparted to them to lull suspicion, for, even in their seemingly quiescent state, they were quick and watchful as those of the lynx. He would look towards the parties he addressed without looking at them, a furtive glance stealing all the while from the corner of his eye at some other object. He would enter into discourse with one man, and maintain it adroitly, for the mere purpose of overhearing the conversation of another ; and sometimes, he would appear to fall fast asleep, that he might entrap his unsuspecting companions into a divulgement of their secrets. Although his senses were ever prowling for their prey, he rarely exhibited the smallest external emotion of any sort ; none, at least, that was intentional ; but in all his pretended abstractions, and even when he affected to be asleep, the activity of his mind betrayed itself



by an involuntary working of the muscles in his cheek, and an unconscious movement of the lips, which, slight as it was, would reveal to a keen observer that he was by no means insensible of, or indifferent to, what was passing around him. In all his various offices and characters, whether he were the butt of his patron, or his confederate in playing upon others, his half-shut and apparently inattentive eye never lost sight of Antony's. A glance was sufficient—he would read the wishes of his capricious master almost as soon as he had formed them; and obey them, whatever they might be, with a quick, supple, intuitive adroitness, that effectually won the heart of Antony, who hated trouble, and loved to have all his desires divined and anticipated. In reward of such convenient talents, he knowingly suffered himself to be pillaged by the Greek, whom he had made a superintendent of his domestic affairs, and who had become almost necessary to his pleasures; preserving,

as he thought, his own independence and superiority, by occasionally treating his parasite with marked indignity, and making him his public butt. So ingenious is self-love, that Pyttalus could even make these seeming humiliations minister to his pride. For every such insult he took an ample revenge out of the purse of his patron; and he became exalted in his own opinion, as he vaunted to himself that he was in real truth the master of the world's master; that the Triumvir who ruled over the Roman people was secretly governed by a Greek; that the pillager of the East was himself a tributary to his physician Pyttalus.

This wily personage, who, as we have already stated, remained behind when the lions, the car, and the cavalcade had returned to the forest, declared that he had been specially commissioned by his illustrious patron, when he first observed the accident, to express his regret at the occurrence, and to offer his services

in recovering the truant horses. Instead of executing these orders, however, he proceeded although with great courtesy, and a cautious avoidance of any appearance of particular interest in the matter, to cross-question the travellers, as to the object of their journey, and the place of their intended residence at Rome. No sooner was the Sagan convinced that he had indeed been conversing with Mark Antony, than, having no longer any motives for concealment, he made a frank disclosure of his character, and the purport of his visit ; expressing also a hope, that no offence would be taken at any observations that might have fallen from him, in his double ignorance of Antony's person, and of Roman customs. This apology, which had been suggested by Gabriel, the Greek declared to be perfectly unnecessary, affirming that no one would be better pleased at the unintended rebuke he had received than Antony himself, whose own frankness and blunt honesty ever

led him to esteem those the most, who resembled him in these qualities. Having gathered all the information he wanted, and specially charged the Sagan to inquire for Pyttalus the physician, when he presented himself at Antony's house, he rode round the lake for the runaway horse, which the peasants had secured, and returning with it, assisted in retackling it to the vehicle; recommending the driver to proceed with the two animals, and promising to make enquiries about the third, which he doubted not would be found in the stables at Aricia. With this advice the man thought it wisest to comply; and our travellers having thanked the Greek for his assistance, and bidden him adieu, until they should again have the pleasure of encountering him at Rome, once more proceeded.

## CHAPTER VII.

THEIR journey was now drawing rapidly to a close. Every thing bespoke the travellers' approach to that mighty metropolis, the capital of the whole world, which, almost covering an entire province with houses, palaces, and temples, reckoned its population by millions, and sucked perpetually into its devouring vortex the produce of the surrounding countries. Zillah's curiosity increased as these indications announced the near termination of their expedition ; and many a time had she looked out, long before the city was visible, in the hope of obtaining a glimpse of some of its taller buildings, breaking the outline of the

dark blue distance. "Yonder is Rome!" at length exclaimed the driver, stopping to breathe his horses on the summit of a gentle eminence, when our travellers, turning their eager eyes in the direction towards which he pointed, beheld the seven-hilled mistress of the world—the imperial city of Rome, spreading its immeasurable vastness before them; its surface now rising and now falling, like a dim undulating sea of houses, amid which some of the loftier temples reared themselves up and caught the sun, as if they were stately vessels riding in an ocean of minor habitations. Although the distance rendered every thing indistinct, the spectacle was grand, almost sublime, from its very immensity; while to Zillah's feelings it became elevated by association, when she recalled the great historical events of which it had been the scene;—the vast and important interests of which it was the present focus; when she reflected that she was gazing upon the throbbing heart, as it were, of

the living universe—that mighty and unconquerable heart, within whose world-involving cells were wrapped up all the destinies of mankind. Her thoughts reverted to Jerusalem ; and she felt with a sensation of deep despondency, how hopeless it would be for her countrymen to struggle against a people like the Romans, whose metropolis seemed to attest, that for some inscrutable purpose God had chosen them for his battle-axe wherewith to break in pieces all the nations of the earth.

“Booshoh he ! Shame upon you !” pettishly exclaimed the Sagan, offended at the unmeasured admiration expressed by Gabriel ; “What see you in yonder huge quarries lifted up out of the pit, or in those piles of baked clay, that can compare with the majesty of the Holy City—whose invisible and spiritual glories mock at these cumbrous configurations of brick and marble—whose splendour is felt in the inward soul, not seen by the bodily eye—whose



precincts are adorned and beautified, not by human hands, but by ministering angels, and the spirit of true holiness—whose king and whose architect is the one unseen God?”

The descent of the road again hid the city from their eyes, and as the subject of its grandeur and extent seemed unpalatable to the Sagan, his companions avoided farther reference to it till they approached the suburbs; which had been for some time announced by temples, triumphal arches, sepulchres, villas, groves, and gardens, alcoves and porticoes for shade, and inns for refreshment, all thrown together in the most picturesque irregularity. The houses soon formed a continuous line on either side, while the constantly increasing throng of carriages and people now converted the Appian road into a bustling and crowded street. Gaily painted and richly ornamented carriages of all sorts began to whisk past them; as well as sedans, horse-litters, and covered or open palanquins,

the latter splendidly decorated, furnished with silver feet, and borne by numerous liveried slaves, within which some voluptuous beauty, or luxurious man of rank, was seen reclining upon cushions. The freaks of suddenly acquired and inordinate wealth were occasionally exhibited in the fantastical embellishments of these sumptuous vehicles, as well as in the animals harnessed to them ; some being drawn by stags, goats, or the various wild beasts, of which there was always a large collection in Rome for the supply of the amphitheatres. Interspersed with these were the humbler carriages for hire, the sledges and various vehicles employed in traffic, the water-carts, and the ponderous waggons from the country, with their numerous yokes of oxen ; the rumbling of the whole assemblage being accompanied by the dissonant cries of the hucksters and market-people, who were bearing their multifarious commodities towards the great emporium, and

the lowing and bleating of cattle trooping onwards in the same direction.

Wide as was the road, their progress had already been retarded by two or three stoppages, when, as they approached the walls, they heard the loud clarion of trumpets, and were obliged to draw aside, to make room for a long train of soldiers marching out of the Porta Capena. It was the Celtic Legion, in full equipment for service; and while our travellers admired the foreign countenances of these fair-haired veterans, their fine athletic forms, their plumed metal helmets, their polished cuirasses, over a red-cloth kilt reaching to their knees, their round embossed shields, and short swords, which, contrary to the Hebrew fashion, they wore on the right side, they could not suppress a smile when they beheld the regimental augurs and aruspices, who were to decide on the auspicious days for fighting, guarding a little cart, containing, as they were informed, the sacred

brood of chickens, the feeding of which was to supply presages to govern the military operations. This puerile superstition appeared to be so little in unison with the majesty of the imperial city, and the noble, manly figures of the soldiers, that the Sagan, who had smiled in the first instance, soon began to pour forth upon it the phials of his wrath. In his Hebrew capacity he might, perhaps, be well indignant ; but as an observer of human affairs, particularly as the world was then constituted, his memory might have reminded him, that a conjunction of credulous fanaticism with military skill and courage, had ever formed the most potent engine of power that human genius could devise ; and that, without this association, the lordly city before him would have probably been nothing better than a miserable village.

The road was at length clear, when they remounted their carriage, and casting a hasty look of admiration at the public gardens outside

the gate, passed through the Porta Capena, and found themselves within the walls of Rome. Although the period had not yet arrived when Octavius, invested with the title of Augustus Cæsar, possessing the sole dominion, and commanding all the resources of the state, was enabled to boast that he had found the city of brick, and left it of marble, it already exhibited some of those stately and massive edifices whose pristine magnificence is still attested by their remains. Many of these were not less interesting to our travellers, from their novelty of purpose, than from their architectural grandeur ; for they beheld various edifices unknown in Palestine,—triumphal arches, theatres, temples of every style and dimension, dedicated to the different gods, obelisks, rostrated columns to commemorate naval victories, porticoes adorned with statues, basilicæ, and above all, the most noble aqueducts, reservoirs, and fountains, dispersing a profusion of water through every

street. As it was often difficult at Jerusalem to obtain a sufficient supply of this article for the numerous purifications prescribed by their religion, the Sagan, who had not passed a single temple without a groan or a curse, was particularly struck with the abundance of fountains and cisterns, which he admired much more than the grandest buildings of the city. As if resolved, however, that nothing should tempt him to bestow farther praise upon the structures of the Pagans, he shut his eyes, reverted to the recollection of his official duties in Jerusalem, and, as he bent gently backward and forward in the carriage, muttered to himself,—“ It is the month Thammuz: on the first is the feast of the new moon; on the seventeenth a fast in memory of the tables of the law, broken by Moses; this was the day when the impious Epistemon set up an idol in the temple.—Eli! what a jolt! these Pagans have most villanous pavements,—were you hurt, my child?”

Zillah replied in the negative, when her father, again closing his eyes, and relapsing into his reverie, continued in the same low tone : “ Next week, we shall be in the month Ab. On the first, is a fast for the death of Aaron, the High Priest ; on the fifth, we commemorate the children of Jethuel, who, after the return from the Captivity, furnished wood to the Temple ; on the ninth, is a fast for God’s declaration to Moses, that none of the murmuring Israelites should enter the land of promise—this was the day that Solomon’s Temple was taken by the accursed Chaldeans ;—on the eighteenth, a fast, because, in the time of Ahaz, the evening lamp went out ; on the twenty-first, a feast upon storing up the wood in the Temple.—Ariel ! what sound was that ? Has the idolatrous Antony returned with his lions ? ”—A loud roar sounding close to the window of the carriage, had, indeed, almost persuaded Zillah that such was the case ; but it proceeded from



a passing caravan, containing, probably, wild beasts for some of the amphitheatres, and the short stoppage that it occasioned was repaid by a sight new to our travellers. They beheld two immense elephants drinking out of a handsome marble fountain ; one of the animals, twisting its lithe proboscis around the ascending column of water, till it resembled a huge serpent encircling a crystal pillar ; and the other, at a signal from its rider, occasionally spurring the water from its trunk, so as to bespatter the passengers,—a practical joke that seemed to be immoderately relished by the by-standers, and reminded the Hebrews of the sprinkling they had themselves received at the Prætor's villa.

“ Of a certainty, these Pagans must have water enough, since they can waste it in such idle fooleries,” said the Sagan.

“ But they have no Pool of Bethesda, that will miraculously heal diseases,” exclaimed Simon, jealous of any superiority in the hea-

then; “they have no Pool of Serpents, no Siloam, no Salt Lake in their neighbourhood.”

The Sagan smiled in complacent approbation of the Levite’s zeal, although he might not think him very happy in his selection of the advantages possessed by Jerusalem; and he again closed his eyes, as if to shut out the sight of heathen abominations, until the carriage stopped, and the driver informed him that they had arrived at the fourth house in the street Janus. “Are we so? are we so?” he exclaimed with a look of joy—“Hosanna to the Lord! it is the residence of my right worthy and ancient friend, Manasseh ben Araboth. Truly, my heart, my very bowels yearn at the thought of seeing him once more. Ring the bell, and pull lustily, for he will be as well pleased as myself at this happy rencounter. Zillah! Gabriel! Simon! I congratulate you all on this prosperous conclusion of our long and perilous journey, for which we must not

omit, in our evening prayers, to return thanks to the God of Israel. Ma-tab-el ! how good is the Lord !”

The door was opened by a slave in livery, chained to the wall, armed with a staff, and attended by a dog ; a customary fashion with the Romans, although its origin remains unexplained. “ Raca !” ejaculated the Sagan, who had a particular abhorrence of the canine race ; “ has my friend forgotten that he is a Hebrew ? has he fallen into the ways of the heathen ? I see no lavers in the vestibule, such as he was ever wont to have when he dwelt at Jerusalem : my mind misgives me sadly. Tell me, my friend, is Manasseh ben Araboth in the house ?”

In answer to this enquiry, the man stated that he no longer dwelt there, having gone a few days before with his family to Parthenope, where he intended to pass the winter, in the

hope of recovering his health and spirits after the loss of a favourite daughter.

“Eli!” ejaculated the Sagan, striking his hand sharply upon his thigh — “to Parthenope, said you?—to Parthenope? This is a blow I did not expect. Selah! what are the hopes and plans of mortals? It was not Sarah—surely, not the soft-eyed, affectionate Sarah, not his oldest daughter that he lost?”

“It was even she who died,” said the slave.

“My poor friend!” exclaimed the Sagan, and he leaned back in the carriage, apparently quite overcome by the thought of his friend’s affliction, and his own disappointment.

“At least it was not his only daughter,” said Gabriel, as with a slight shudder he threw himself into the opposite corner of the vehicle, apparently too much occupied in painful reflections to pay any attention to their present dilemma. The driver stood by the side of the

carriage, waiting farther orders ; the porter and his dog continued staring at the travellers ; Simon drew himself bolt upright, wondering that no one spoke ; Zillah felt the silence to be irksome, and yet knew not well how to break it, until, observing that her father was too much affected to issue any orders, she at length suggested to Gabriel the necessity of their driving to some tavern, or securing present lodgings in a private-house, respecting which their driver might, perhaps, furnish them with information. She was obliged to repeat her speech before it was noticed, and then the musing Gabriel answered somewhat wide of the mark : “ Happy Manasseh ! he has other children ; mine was an only daughter, and such a one !—Who spoke of lodgings ? Oh ! certainly, certainly, we cannot sleep in the street ; and as I have been your caterer on the journey, you must e’en trust me to provide for your comforts at its conclusion. Talk of Benjamin, that jumped over the

fish-pond at Bethlehem? show me the man who can take a better leap than this!" He vaulted nimbly out of the carriage as he spoke, and, having exchanged a few words with the driver, walked rapidly away, and was soon lost amid the pedestrians and vehicles that were perpetually passing and repassing. After a short delay he returned, and, informing them he had seen apartments likely to suit them, in a handsome house of the street Mercury, of which the back windows looked into a spacious garden, he remounted, and directed the driver what course to take. The lodgings in question, being approved by all parties, were engaged for a short term, the carriage was dismissed, and our travellers took possession of their apartments: which promised to meet their wishes in every respect, although it was still a grievous disappointment, that they had not been able to domiciliate themselves with their worthy countryman, Manasseh ben Araboth.

But little was said during the remainder of the evening, for the Sagan was in no mood for discourse. He beheld all his plans suddenly and unexpectedly frustrated ; the great object which had induced him to accept the embassy was defeated ; and he dreaded the prospect of taking his daughter back with him to Jerusalem, and exposing her to those perils and horrors, in case the city should be besieged, which he had so anxiously endeavoured to avoid. Nor would the provincial towns offer her a safer sanctuary. In the event of a civil war, aggravated by the presence of a Roman army in the country, every part of Palestine would be as much exposed to the unlicensed brutality of the soldiery as the Holy City itself ; and he recoiled from the idea of making his beloved child a dweller in a land torn by convulsion, strife, and havoc. No ; it would be better to leave her in Rome, a sure asylum, until tranquillity were restored to Palestine. But with whom could he entrust so



precious a charge, now that the only friend in whom he had implicit confidence had departed from the city? Doubtless there were many other Hebrew families in the place; but they were strangers to him; and the loss that Manasseh had sustained, had so quickened the Sagan's apprehensions of a similar calamity, that he revolted from the idea of placing his daughter in other hands, or of even withdrawing her for a moment from his own care and custody. Such were the vacillating thoughts that occupied his anxious mind, now impelling him to take his child back to Jerusalem, now suggesting the superior safety of Rome; and he retired to rest as completely undecided how to act, as when he had first begun to meditate upon the subject.

Nor were Zillah's reflections of a much more cheering tendency. As she reclined upon her bed, listening to the eternal rolling of carriages and the unceasing din of the vast metropolis, the thought that she had not a single friend or

acquaintance among the myriads thus busily moving around her, struck upon her heart with an affecting sense of lonesomeness ; and she felt, painfully felt, that no solitude is so appalling as when we feel ourselves alone, amid the thickest throngs and the most stirring bustle of our fellow-creatures. Nabal's predictions again presented themselves to her memory ; and as the perils she had hitherto encountered, unpleasant as some of them had been, were assuredly not the last, she concluded that her more trying visitations were reserved for her arrival in Rome, and were consequently now about to commence. Esau, too, and his mysterious appearances, filled her mind with vain surmises and misgivings ; but she endeavoured to summon fortitude to endure her fate, whatever it might be ; and earnestly recommending herself to the protection of Heaven, she at length fell asleep.

As it was concluded that Antony would not immediately return to Rome, it had been the

Sagan's intention to show Zillah a portion of the city before he employed himself upon the great object of his mission. A guide having been procured, he was about to set out for this purpose on the morning after their arrival, when he was not a little surprised by a visit from Pyt-talus the Greek, who stated, that having learned their address from the porter of the house in Janus Street, who had heard Gabriel's directions to the driver, he had called to offer his services in escorting them whithersoever they might wish to go. His noble patron, for so he always termed Mark Antony, had specially commissioned him, he said, to be in attendance upon them, as soon as he had learned the object of their embassy, and had charged him to declare, that he would be ready to grant them an audience on the following day. "I conclude," continued the Greek, "that as you come to solicit from him no less a favour than the reversal of a solemn treaty, ratified by a decree of the Senate,

your King has not sent you empty-handed ; that he is prepared to tender an equivalent for so important a boon ; that you are, in fact, provided with some present offerings as an earnest of his future gratitude. Such interchanges of civility are customary among the great ; and it might mar your negotiation, were you to deviate in this respect from the established usage. I am most cordially desirous of your success ; and these are the reasons that induce me to allude to a subject, which you may, perhaps, think it indelicate that I should bring forward in so early a stage of our acquaintance."

This speech, uttered in a tone of the most friendly interest, was merely sent forth upon a voyage of discovery, (for nothing had been previously said on the subject,) that he might ascertain how far his new clients were worth attention, either from his patron or himself. The Sagan, who had no motives for concealment, and was won by the soft voice and insinuating man-

ners of his visitant, confessed that he had been furnished with such presents as, he flattered himself, would prove acceptable ; while Gabriel, having previously withdrawn the various jewels from their hiding-places, and arranged them to the best advantage, in cases which he had brought with him for that purpose, opened and displayed them on the table. It was not any politic desire to enhance the value of the gift, though such would, perhaps, have been the predominant feeling with any other negotiator, but the genuine enthusiasm of an amateur, that prompted him to descant fully, eloquently, not to say passionately, upon every jewel ; to trace its history ; to hold it in different lights ; to point out its peculiar beauties ; to look at it most tenderly, and even to kiss several in the ecstasy of his admiration. Nose and ear-jewels, rings, bracelets, and carcanets, gems for signets and pectorals, all had their history ; all had been procured with infinite trouble, and a total disregard of ex-

pense ; all were matchless ; and all were so endeared to him by their unrivalled merits, that the giving them up really seemed to touch his innermost heart. “ Ah ! my beloved emerald,” he exclaimed, pressing it to his lips ; “ that which the Queen of Sheba gave to Solomon, in reward for the riddle that he solved, was but a green bubble, compared to thee. Behold these yellow topazes of Cush ; are there any in the High Priest’s ephod that may equal them ? Not till a taper can eclipse the sun ! And these star-spotted sapphires, do they not rival the mid-summer firmament by night ? And this carbuncle ring, brighter than the stones of fire set in the robes of the Tyrian King : I tell thee, Greek, that neither that which Pharaoh gave to Joseph, nor the mystical, magical jewel, which was buried on the finger of Solomon, and, as it is said, still emblazes his whole sepulchre, gave a richer or more ruddy radiance than this. I have seen, indeed, one of ruby, that might, perhaps,

sparkle not less refulgently ; it dazzled our eyes for a moment, once in Palestine, and once at your Italian town of Anxur—but it vanished, disappeared, was rapt away in its own fire, like the holy prophet Elijah, and I shall see it no more. By the Temple ! it was a strange vision !”

“ Methinks those roseate pearls,” said the Greek, “ seem to be as rare and beautiful as any in your whole collection.”

“ What ! these that I bought of Hatem ben Almalec, the Idumæan ? Lo ! the sunshine of the Persian Gulf is still upon them. None but royal oysters could have produced them. What a pectoral would they make for a queen ! What think you of this large sardonyx, which I exchanged with Josa Jochanan, of Babylon ? Ah ! my darling, my fellow-traveller, whom I have cherished in my bosom, it will grieve me to bid thee adieu. And thou, too, thou rare green topaz, found in the Tomb of David and



Saul, ought I not to cherish thee as a Hebrew relic? But thou must depart from me, even like this chrysoprasus, which Rab Joshua ben Levi assured me was once worn by Simon Maccabeus; and this diamond-ring, which heretofore the Pagan King of Pontus called the morning star, as if he had plucked it from the sky with his own finger."

The Greek had steadily fixed his half-shut eyes upon the treasure, not in admiration, for their expression was that of perfect indifference, but that he might take an accurate inventory of the whole in his memory, lest any portion should be afterwards subtracted or exchanged. This his quick retentive faculties soon enabled him to accomplish, and being satisfied of their great value, he proceeded to caution the Hebrews, with a most plausible appearance of disinterestedness, against defeating their own purpose, by the manner in which they should present their offering to Mark Antony. Not

only would his patron's delicacy be shocked, as he declared, by the smallest appearance of a direct boon for his services; but his enemies, and the partisans of his rival, who were not less numerous than vigilant, would infallibly discover the circumstance, pervert it to their own factious objects, inveigh loudly against the corruption of Antony, and render utterly abortive all the exertions and all the donations of the Hebrews. "You had much better leave this part of the negotiation to me," said Pytталus. "Give me a list of the jewels; I will report their number and great value to my noble patron, and take his orders when and where it may please him to receive this tribute of your King's friendship and respect."

As the Sagan and Gabriel were well aware that an embassy like theirs, undertaken in the face of a recent decree of the Senate, and especially calculated to excite the jealousy of Octavius, required great secrecy, and the most

delicate management, they were fully disposed to admit the prudence of the Greek's advice, and to acquiesce in his suggestions. Having expressed this in general terms, they made no farther arrangement for the present, but set off, under the direction of their guide, to survey as much of the city as could be accomplished in a morning's ramble. When they entered Rome on the previous day, none but the public buildings and the grander edifices had caught their attention ; but they had now leisure to observe that the great mass of buildings was comparatively mean and shabby, many of the streets narrow and dirty, notwithstanding the profuse supply of water, and shut in with high wooden houses, of which the tall sloping roofs were covered with large tiles. These were handsome, however, compared with some of the miserable hovels occupied by the numerous slaves and lower description of artisans ; which latter huts appeared, perhaps, still more wretched, from

their occasional contrast with the splendid mansions of the nobility, embracing gardens within their walls, planted with trees on the outside, and profusely decorated with statues, the number of which, dispersed in every part of the city, seemed almost to equal that of the living population. Every thing, in short, attested the presence of great wealth and great poverty ; which, if they do not necessarily produce one another, will be generally found co-existent.

As most of our readers are presumed to be conversant with the more celebrated buildings of Rome at this period, we need not accompany our travellers in their excursion. Gabriel had cautioned their guide, in a whisper, not to conduct them to any of the temples, as he feared the Sagan's forbearance would hardly endure a close visual inspection of those haunts of idolatry, and still less any actual contact with their priests or worshippers. Indeed, there would have been no time for viewing even a small

selection of the four hundred and twenty structures of this description, embraced within the far-stretching walls of Rome, and devoted to the religious purposes of its polytheistical inhabitants; for the whole morning was hardly sufficient for the examination of the principal Forum, a vast assemblage of irregular buildings, in the form of an oblong square, surrounded by piazzas, within whose area were concentrated all the chief public institutions of the Romans, with the exception of their temples of worship,—an omission which only rendered the busy scene more interesting and acceptable to the Sagan. Here were the Rostra, whence the Tribunes of the people and their public orators had delivered their celebrated harangues—the vast Justice-halls of the different tribunals—the residences of the chief bankers—the most splendid shops—the commercial marts—the sheltered piazzas for fashionable loungers—the less frequented walks for philosophers or

politicians, who wished not to be either interrupted or overheard. Such an emporium of law, politics, and trade ; such an epitome, as it were, of the whole city, surrounded by stately edifices and statues, and thronged with busy multitudes, presented a grand and animating spectacle, which our Hebrews, intolerant as they generally were of foreign institutions, could hardly have contemplated without respect and admiration, had not their companion, although himself a Pagan, done his utmost to vilify, distort, and desecrate all that they beheld. Pyttalus was one of those Pessimists who imagine that penetration is evinced by universal suspicion and mistrust ; who hope, perhaps, to exalt themselves by degrading others ; who discredit every thing that is noble, believe all that is base ; who would, in short, persuade their hearers, that the pure wholesome temple of moral beauty and virtue, is a lazar-house of noisome corruption and festering abominations. A more false and

pestilent treason against human nature, a more impious profanation of the divinity of goodness that is within us, a more self-condemning calumny upon the world, it is not easy to conceive; and yet, upon this paltry, mischievous basis, have weak-headed and bad-hearted men, in all ages, not only contrived to obtain a reputation for shrewdness and sagacity; but sometimes have been enabled to distress, with painful misgivings, those nobler spirits, who would wish to sympathise with their fellow-creatures, in the fulness of love and charity, and to believe themselves surrounded with congenial hearts and kindred souls.

In conformity with this disparaging propensity, Pyttalus pointed out to the attention of the foreigners, the peasants beleaguering the doors of the advocates, with bribes in the shape of poultry, jars of fish, oil, and other rural produce; declaring that, if the judges themselves



were not bought in so open a manner, their venality and corruption were not the less notorious. If they met a religious procession, he stigmatized the priests, in general, as a set of hypocrites, who would sordidly barter their consciences for the most paltry advantages; the merchants and dealers were knaves in the gross; and he did not accost a single individual, either male or female, against whom he had not some scandalous anecdote, or vilifying insinuation, to advance. He would not admit even the Vestals to be pure; and though Gabriel received these statements with doubt, as the exaggerations of a jaundiced mind, influenced, perhaps, by a Grecian feeling of nationality, the prejudices of the Sagan led him to give credence to all he heard, and furnished him with an ample fund of invective, during the remainder of their stay, against the crying abominations and utter worthlessness of the heathen. Zillah's pure mind

revolted altogether from these imputations; she shook them from her, or rather suffered them not to reach her, as the stainless sky refuses to be blackened by the murky exhalations of earth. "Surely," she exclaimed to her father, when Pyttalus had left them, "this foul-mouthed Greek must have forgotten that, in his own language, the word slanderer is synonymous with a devil. I cannot believe all the noble institutions we have seen to be grounded in fraud and injustice; nor, if I were even proved to be mistaken, could I respect the persons who deprived my mind of a most grateful error. If I were to behold all the glorious buildings and statues of the Forum, with the pure heavens above it, reflected on the pellucid bosom of a fountain, should I be indebted to the rude clown, who, by dashing a stone into the mud at its bottom, would attempt to prove that the beautiful picture I had been admiring was only a fair illusion of the surface, while

there was nothing but foulness and corruption beneath it?—Yours then be the foulness and corruption, I would say ; and give me back the beauty, 'illusive though it be, that you have thus wantonly destroyed.”

## CHAPTER VIII.

ON the following morning the Sagan and his kinsman, provided with their credentials, set off betimes to the residence of Mark Antony,—a stately mansion, which had formerly belonged to Pompey. It was situated at a considerable distance from their lodgings ; and the great men then held their crowded levees at so very early an hour, that to ensure an audience, and avoid the chance of being dismissed till the morrow, it was necessary to be stirring “ *sideribus dubiis*,” before day-light. The pale silver crescent of the moon was yet hanging in the sky, throwing a faint gleam upon the loftier temples and

the statues that crowned the summits, when the Hebrews set forth, having been cautioned by their friend the Greek not to wait till his noble patron should be beleaguered by his customary mob of visitants. Not trusting to this injunction, he was himself coming to escort them, and they luckily met him soon after leaving their own residence. "Avete! my friends," he exclaimed: "this is well: I feared that your fatigues yesterday might have occasioned you to oversleep yourselves this morning, so I came to perform the part of Gallus, and crow you up before sunrise."

"I am better used to early rising," said the Sagan, "than to these long walks, as my tender feet somewhat unpleasantly remind me; so that if we should encounter a hackney carriage in our route, I should be well disposed to put its horses in requisition."

"Listen!" replied the Greek, "do you hear any longer that rumbling of wheels, like the

ceaseless roar of the ocean, which has probably kept you sleepless half the night? No, all is hushed, the drivers are asleep in their beds; and were you a porter, a cabbage-vender, a pauper, or a slave, you might perhaps be enjoying the same luxury, for the streets are now only occupied by the pious and the busy of the better classes. Our temples are all opened and lighted up long before the dawn; and as the business of the day would hardly thrive unless it were sanctified by some act of devotion, no wonder the Romans hurry betimes to their prayers, for few are irreligious where godliness is a great gain. Some are actuated by the selfish hope of advantage; others imagine that their most criminal supplications will be granted; and a third party seek only the reputation of piety: well, therefore, may the throng increase."

"But many of these early risers," observed Gabriel, "are stopping at private houses, and

not speeding to the temples as you would lead us to infer. What are they about—how are they employed?”

“ Like ourselves—hurrying to pay court to their patrons and protectors. I told you that this was the hour when the ambitious began their slavish duties, and the poor gentry their daily labours. The proscriptions and massacres of the last civil war are too recent to have been forgotten—nay, they seem not unlikely to be renewed ; and all therefore are busy in attaching themselves to some powerful protector, whom they strive to propitiate with flattery, or the more efficacious persuasive of bribes. He that is thus secured may, perhaps, be enabled to shield his client ; and thus the whole town runs, from door to door, paying their matin visits to some great man, who, when they are dismissed, himself hastens to render the same homage to another.”

“ Eli !” whispered the Sagan, “ are there no



laws in Rome, no safeguard for innocence but this odious system of corruption and favoritism? Are such the prospects of the city to which I have brought my Zillah as to a sure sanctuary, a preserved Zoar in the midst of the destruction? Woe, woe, to the earth when there is no corner of rest for the weak and the weary; when it is so overflowed with the waters of strife, that the dove of peace cannot find a resting-place for her foot !”

He walked on in mournful silence, resigning the conversation to his companions, until they arrived at the mansion of Antony; and passing through the outer court or vestibule, which was already filled with clients, retainers, and paupers of the lower order, some of them waiting for their daily dole, they ascended a flight of steps, and entered the Atrium, through handsome folding doors of brass. This was a spacious and lofty hall of variegated marbles; its roof, supported by Ionic columns, had a large

opening in its centre to admit the light ; and the rain, when it flowed through the same aperture, was received into a handsomely decorated cistern, of which the surface was level with the tessellated floor beneath. Beside the latter stood the altar of the domestic divinity, adorned with a serpent feeding from a dish. On the right and left of the apartment were wings containing conversation recesses, provided with divans, their entrance being covered with painted hangings or curtains, so constructed as to be drawn or left open, at the pleasure of the occupants. The sides of the hall above these hangings, and the whole of the ceiling, were fretted with sculptures and mouldings, and enriched with devices at once massive and elegant. In this magnificent saloon were collected those who had thus far obtained the privilege of the *entrée*, and who constituted such a loose troop of mountebanks, parasites, scoundrels, merry-andrews, and women of pleasure, as it might not

have been easy to find assembled in any other house at Rome, unless perhaps in that of Tigellius the singer. Early as was the hour, their number was considerable. Here were female flute-players of Syria, the dealers in spices and perfumes, dancers, mimics, buffoons, women of every sort except the respectable, fortune-tellers, jugglers, ventriloquists, and, though last, not least in disreputable practices, some of the robed priests of Isis and Cybele, beggars by profession, and pandars by practice. All these worthies had assembled thus early in the hope of forestalling the more decent suitors, and of obtaining some favour in a momentary interview with Antony, who was the great patron of their whole order.

Many who were chatting together in the alcoves, or showing off their monkey tricks, for the amusement of one another, in the centre of the hall, hurried up to Pyttalus as he entered, beseeching his good offices in their behalf ; an

application which some reinforced by insinuating a bribe into his hand. Looking at the latter individuals with his usual sleepy, or rather sly half-shut eye, he gave them a quarter nod of acknowledgement, and, without uttering a word, passed on to the upper end of the hall, opened a door at the right hand by means of a key which he took from his pocket, and ushering his companions into a passage, conducted them to a small chamber at the back of the mansion, looking out upon the garden. It was fitted up as an armoury, obviously, however, for purposes of curiosity and show, rather than of utility; the weapons being fantastically arranged, and all manifestly of foreign origin. They were, in fact, a selection of such as Antony himself had taken from the enemies with whom he had contended in various parts of the world, and thus constituted at once a little warlike museum and a species of domestic trophy. Among the hammer-

hilted swords of the Persians, the long black javelins of the Egyptians, and Parthian bows and arrows, the Hebrews beheld, not without emotion, several weapons which they recognized as the manufacture of their own country ; having been taken from Aristobulus, when he had excited the Jews to revolt, and had been attacked and conquered by the Romans under Antony.

Pyttalus, who had quitted the apartment during this survey, now re-entered it, and informed them that his patron was dressing, after the bath, and would give them the first audience of the day in the course of a few minutes. His appearance was not so immediate as had been promised, but he at length presented himself, saluted the strangers courteously, seated himself, and motioned to his visitants to do the same. Pyttalus withdrew into a corner, and stood against the wall, hoping probably to escape notice, and be suffer-

ed to overhear the conversation ; but a stern look from his patron was instantly understood, and he hastened to quit the apartment, indemnifying himself for this haughty dismissal, by listening on the outside to every thing that passed within.

Antony having now disfurnished himself of the beard, which had been assumed for the occasion when they had seen him enacting the part of Hercules, they were the better enabled to judge of his countenance, which, in spite of his bold and manly features, betrayed the effects of the intemperate habits and enervating excesses in which he had so long indulged, at the same time that it bore the impress of a reckless, sullen wilfulness, as if he were prepared to say —“ I feel that I am rushing forward upon my fate, but I am not the less firmly resolved to persevere, and desperately defy the issue.” Attired in a loose folding robe, such as it was usual to throw on after bathing, he had

yet found time to deck himself in his ornaments, for he had rings in his ears, and every finger was loaded with valuable jewels : on which Gabriel fixed his regards much more keenly than on the countenance of the wearer, and drew an auspicious augury from his manifest partiality for such glittering baubles.

The Sagan presented his credentials, at which Antony only cast a hasty glance, and then threw them on a table beside him. “ You are doubtless aware,” he said, “ that by a decree of the Senate, Herod has been declared King of the Jews, and that he is gone to take possession of his crown. He is a brave, active, and superior young man, to whom I am under some obligations ; and I am not accustomed to forget the interests of those who have once served me.”

“ When the Senate passed its decree,” said the Sagan, “ it was done in ignorance that Antigonus had obtained possession of Jerusalem ;



that the whole country had acknowledged him as its King; and that the claims of Herod could not be enforced without a long and bloody war, of which it is impossible to foretell the issue."

"There is but one issue to the wars of the Romans," said Antony haughtily.

"But if I can show that it is for their interest, and more particularly for your own, to preserve peace with our royal master—"

"Why, in that case," said Antony, relaxing into a smile, "you may look upon the decree of the Senate as a *brutum fulmen*, and consider myself and Antigonus as sworn friends. Neither of your claimants has any legal right to the crown; for Hyrcanus, the former King, is still living, I am told, among the Parthians."

"But he is disqualified from holding the office of High Priest, being maimed by the loss of his ears."

“ Which your noble King, my worthy friend, that is to be, ordered to be cut off, or bit them off himself, if I mistake not, that he might be sure of incapacitating his rival. In that case, the crown devolves to the Romans.”

“ Rather to yourself,” said the Sagan ; “ for in the division of the empire, we have understood that Syria, and the East in general, were specially apportioned to Mark Antony.”

“ You have been rightly informed ; and woe to him who would dare to interfere with my government !” Antony, who had fully resolved upon a collision with Octavius, and thought it by no means unlikely that the great struggle for sole dominion might be fought in the East, felt the full importance of the support that might be derived from a warlike nation like the Jews, and was already half disposed to consider Antigonus, a King in possession, a much more beneficial ally than his friend Herod, who had obtained no part

of his royalty but the title. "How many men," he abruptly enquired, interrupting the Sagan in the midst of an elaborate argument—"how many soldiers, horse and foot, can your master furnish me, if I recognize his title, form alliance with him, and claim from him the assistance of an auxiliary army?—Pshaw!" he impatiently exclaimed, when both the Sagan and Gabriel declared themselves utterly unable to answer his question—"This is the only thing you ought to know, or that Antigonus need to have communicated: might is the sole right of kings—he who has the strongest army is sure to have the best argument."

The Sagan pledged himself, that in the event supposed, his royal master would support his illustrious ally with all the forces of his kingdom. Antony wished not to come to any immediate decision upon the object of the Hebrew embassy, but rather to be governed by circumstances, which were now rapidly disclosing them-

selves, as the approaching crisis drew nearer and nearer. In the midst of considerations involving his own fate, and that of the empire at large, he had never for a moment lost sight of Zillah; and as his designs upon her honour might require a little time for their development, he had an additional motive for protracting the negotiation. He contented himself, therefore, with telling the Sagan, that he felt the force of his arguments, and saw no insuperable objection to a compliance with the wishes of Antigonus; but that, as it was too important a matter to be hastily decided, he must request a few days to give it a more mature consideration. He then enquired after the health of his daughter, expressing his hopes that she had recovered from the alarm he had so unwittingly occasioned her in the Aricinian forest, and added, that he should request a lady of distinction, who was in the suite of his wife, to call upon her, and offer her services in showing her whatever

might be worthy of inspection in Rome. So saying, he yawned, stretched himself, and snapped his fingers with each hand: at which summons, Pyttalus re-entered the apartment,—  
“Have you got the key of the Egyptian-gate, or is it already open?” he said to the Greek.

“This is the key; but my noble patron will hardly go out thus early, when there are so many visitants, and some of good note, who are expecting the honour of a short interview.”

“*Servantes fallit clientes*,” said Antony, stretching himself; “if there be honour in a short interview, what must there be in none at all? There, Greek, is a problem for you: solve it, sophist, against my return.” He took the key, waved his hand to the Hebrews, and making his way out by a small gate at the back of the mansion, left his numerous clients and suitors of all sorts, who by this time completely filled the vestibule and the spacious Atrium, to kick their heels, until they should discover, that the patron, for

whom they had been waiting since sunrise, had given them the slip, and made his escape.

Both the Sagan and Gabriel were highly delighted with their reception, as well as with the prospect opened to them of accomplishing the great object of their mission. " I confess," said the former, " that it would marvellously gratify me, were I to succeed in this embassy ; not only for the sake of our dear Jerusalem, whose peace it would secure, but that, methinks, I may fairly challenge to myself no mean portion of the merit, seeing that the logical and argumentative way in which I stated our case was absolutely unanswerable. Did you mark, Gabriel, what sudden conviction I struck into his mind, when I so adroitly proved, that his own interest, as well as that of Rome, distinctly pointed towards an union with Antigonus? I am no professed diplomatist, but I see that plain good sense, and a somewhat terse and luminous eloquence, are better than all the chica-

nery and cunning of the schools. And truly, this Mark Antony, though an idolater and a debauchee, who is as a neighing horse in his unbridled lust—one given up, as I may say, to the Rahabs, and Dalilahs, and the wanton Zonahs of the heathen,—yet hath he not stopped his ears like the serpent to the voice of the charmer. Would he but listen to me in spiritual matters, as patiently as he hath this day done in the affairs of our embassy, I might, perchance, equally succeed in making him my proselyte, and live to see the happy day when Ekron should be as a Jebusite. Thus may it be! Selah!”

“The happy day when Antony lives to see the jewels, will bring us nearer to our mark, I suspect,” said Gabriel. “Pyttalus, the worthy Greek, who seems to have a notion of precious stones, has doubtless given him a flaming account of our treasures, which has probably won his heart; though I would not be under-



stood, Rab Malachi, as undervaluing your oratory ; for you are not ineloquent and slow of speech, like Moses, but rather of fluent and happy tongue, like Aaron the Levite. Ah ! when this hook-nosed pagan shall have seen the blushing pearls that I bought of Hatem ben Almalec, and the green topaz found in the Tomb of David, and the chrysoprasus which Rab Joshua ben Levi—— ”

“ Enough, enough ! ” interposed the Sagan, somewhat pettishly. “ I have your whole catalogue by heart. Eleazer defended his field of lentiles, and why may not you stand up for your baubles and gewgaws ? but unless a man will leave pure water springing from a rock, for the melted snow of Lebanon defiled with mud, assuredly this pagan will not be better persuaded by the glittering dross of the earth, than by the mouth of the righteous when it speaketh wisdom.”

Gabriel fully retained his own opinion, as to

the superior efficacy of the jewels; but as he had the good sense to keep his conviction to himself, the Sagan's complacency presently returned, and they both reached their lodgings in good spirits, highly satisfied with the prospects of their embassy.

On the next day, they went to see a review in the Campus Martius; a spectacle to which Gabriel enticed his somewhat unwilling kinsman, who neither liked heathen soldiers nor long walks, by informing him, that the whole spacious enclosure was surrounded by covered porticoes, where he might sit in the shade and enjoy the show at his leisure. Zillah, who had requested to be left at home, received a visit during their absence from Maia, the lady of whom Antony had made mention in his interview. She was, as he had correctly stated upon that occasion, of a distinguished family, but by no means of an unquestioned reputation; rumour, or perhaps scandal, not hesitating to

insinuate that she had been upon very good terms with Antony, who had given her a principal appointment about his wife, merely that she might enact the part of a spy. Slander itself had never dared to breathe a whisper against the spotless reputation of Octavia, a woman still more illustrious by her undeviating virtue and generous attachment to her husband, under the most trying insults and provocations, than even by her exalted birth. The coarse-minded Antony, incapable of appreciating such a noble character, and knowing how little he had merited her regard, deemed it not possible that her sense of duty to a husband could outweigh her attachment to her brother ; and, suspecting that she might be instrumental in the political intrigues hatching against himself, he had placed Maia about her person for the purpose of making observations, and conveying to him any information of this sort which she might be enabled to pick up. Glad as she was to accept an ap-

pointment of so honourable a nature, and so well calculated to repair her own somewhat shattered reputation, Maia was scarcely qualified for her office, for she was a good-tempered, lively, laughing, rattling little beauty, who having long since dismissed Mark Antony from any share he might have ever had in her affections, and becoming sincerely attached to Octavia, as she grew better acquainted with her noble character, used her best endeavours to preserve harmony between the husband and the wife.

Accosting Zillah with that smiling frankness and cordiality which instantly win their way to the heart, and scatter to the air all the cold formalities of etiquette, she told her, that she had been commissioned to escort her in her rambles about Rome, and that she hoped, in the first instance, to introduce her to Octavia, who would hold a levee in the course of the morning. "Don't talk to me about your

friends !” she exclaimed, interrupting Zillah ; “ how should they know any thing about Rome ? You already have a guide ? what guide ? Pyttalus the Greek ? Don’t mention him. I know he is Mark Antony’s factotum ; but I hate a man that cannot look you in the face when he is speaking to you. They are all sly, or something worse ; don’t you think so ? Besides, there are fifty places to which no male creature could obtain admission ; and your friends are bearded, I am told, like Jupiter himself. I must take you to the baths, which are magnificent. Have you any in Judæa ? Amazement ! how well you speak our language ! where could you possibly have learned it, for you were not surely born when Pompey took Jerusalem ?—They say, that he who has seen Rome has seen everything ; but I should dearly like to have a peep at your Temple, nevertheless, for I hear there are no statues in it. How very odd ! how ridiculous it must look ! One might

as well say one's prayers in a great barn. And is it really true that you have only one Deity? La! what a poor, dull, solitary religion! I was told that the Jews were a superstitious people, who would believe any thing; but it seems to me that you believe nothing—quite as bad as some of our Epicureans.—You look serious—nay, do not be angry with me; I am a giddy creature, every body tells me so, you must not therefore mind what I say. I had no intention to hurt your feelings—in Rome we talk and joke about these matters just as we like. Come, accept me for your friend, and we shall soon know one another too well, I hope, either to give or to take offence.”

She held out her hands as she spoke, her head inclined on one side, and her ringlets falling over in the same direction, disclosed a brow so frank and open, an eye so playful and winning, a face so invitingly wreathed with smiles and dimples, that Zillah could not but

accept her proffered hands, and declare that she most gratefully received her as her guide and friend during her residence in Rome. "Quick ! then, quick !" continued Maia ; " let me see your wardrobe ; it is time you should begin dressing for the levee. Have you brought no hair-dresser with you—no mistress of the robes ? Never mind, there are plenty in Rome. Venus ! what beautiful hair you have ! and what a profusion ! but where are your false locks ? You will never be able to make up more than three or four stages of your own, and the present fashion requires a head-dress of six, at least. You see, mine is not yet built up."

Zillah declared, that not having anticipated the honour of being presented to Octavia, she had come totally unprovided with proper habiliments, and must therefore beg to defer the visit till she could equip herself more becomingly. " Becomingly !" exclaimed Maia ; " I know not that your own fashions may not be



more becoming than ours ; so let me see, let me see. I am one of the committee that meet every week to settle the mode, and you may perhaps furnish me with an idea."

Zillah had brought a rich dress with her, which her visitant tossed from one hand to the other in raptures, declaring it was the most original, ridiculous, bewitching, preposterous thing she had ever beheld since the Spanish tunics were in vogue, and insisting that it should be put on immediately, in order that she might judge the better of the effect. " Beautiful !" she exclaimed, when her desire had been obeyed ; " admirably adapted for a large figure, though it would overwhelm such a diminutive body as myself. Positively, you are stately and handsome as the ox-eyed Juno, majestic as Minerva ; so, without stopping another moment for your veil or your peacocks, your spear or your Gorgon's head, since you are quite goddess enough without them, you

shall accompany me instantly to Octavia's levee. Antony expects to gain prodigious credit with the people, I am told, because he is about to exhibit a rhinoceros in the amphitheatre for the first time. Let me be your first introducer at the drawing-room, and I will wager my pearl bracelets against a brass ear-ring, that I obtain a thousand times more admiration for my two-legged beauty than he will for his four-legged fright."

Zillah protested against being thus taken by surprise, declaring that it was quite impossible to comply with the request until she had consulted her father. Maia, with a playful petulance, scolded her for already wishing to violate the compact of friendship, and in the midst of the discussion the Sagan returned. "Go, my dear child, go, by all means," he exclaimed, when he had been introduced to their visitant, and understood the nature of her application; "the acquaintance of Octavia is an honour that

ought to be embraced with alacrity, and why should you not be justly proud of our Hebrew garb? It is a more ancient and a more becoming dress than any that I have seen among the Gentiles; nor even at Rome is it fitting that the Sagan's daughter should forget Jerusalem. You have no reason, like Esther, to conceal that you are a Jewess; nor am I a Mordecai to give you any such advice."

Whatever might be her own wishes, Zillah's obedience to her father was always immediate and implicit, so that, without making more objections, she entered Maia's carriage, which had been kept in waiting, and away they drove. The tongue of the little volatile Roman still contrived to make itself heard, in spite of the rumbling of the innumerable wheels rolling on every side of them; and Zillah was presently enabled to confirm what she had already suspected, that her new friend was a great dealer in small talk. "Mind you ask me to show

you Octavia's splendid mirror," she exclaimed ;  
" it is all of polished silver, and as tall as I am, though that is not saying much for it. Look at the female wigs in that hair-dresser's shop—positively they get higher and higher every day. Oh ! I must stop at my Egyptian florist's for a minute, just to get a bunch of amaranths. Our Roman dealers are sad bunglers. Do you like auburn hair ? It is quite the rage, merely because it is so extremely rare. What a fuss all the men make about that horrible Cytheris, because she has golden ringlets ! She has quite turned Mark Antony's head. Talking of turning heads, they say the Batavian tincture will turn any hair red. You will observe, that it is quite the rage to make the eyebrows meet, either by paint or false hair. Do I like it ? No ; I think it hideous. Yours look quite beautiful ! so finely arched, and so much more noble from being separated. Nature, you see, knows best. La ! you have no patches ! I must posi-

tively give you one or two. Do you know, some of our men wear them. Is it not ridiculous? Driver! driver! turn down the next street, for I see a procession coming towards us of those horrid priests of Cybele, and I have no wish to have our horses frightened, and our necks broken."

At these words Zillah looked out, and beheld a troop of wild-looking beings, dancing in armour, making a confused noise with Phrygian pipes, drums, and cymbals, howling as if they were mad, and cutting themselves as they went along. "What strange men are these?" she enquired of her companion.

"Oh, my dear, do not call them men. The nasty, odious creatures! I am glad we have lost sight of them. Look at those Umbrian peasants, and their tall jars of oil—the boors, with their raw goatskin boots, shaggy as Satyrs, and the women, with their long brass ear-rings, short tunics, and naked legs. Their skins

are dusky-red, so are their clothes, so is the dust that covers them. Have they not the flavour of the soil upon them, like so many great vegetables just transplanted? There goes Philyrea, the dancer, in her fine gilded car: how bold and beautiful the creature looks! Was there ever such insolence! Look, she will not draw aside to let the Vestal virgins pass, although every body is obliged to give them the road. Aha! the Lictors have got hold of her horses—they drive them back—and see, see! one of them has fallen into the great gutter, and splashed her all over. Ha! ha! the saucy jade is rightly served.”—The dancer and her gaudy vehicle being thus unceremoniously disposed of, the magnificent car of the Vestals, drawn by four white horses abreast, preceded by Lictors with the fasces, and followed by a numerous retinue of female slaves, swept by in state, when Maia’s carriage, which had stopped to let them pass, again proceeded. “There were only Sa-

bina and Paullina in the car," resumed the loquacious little Roman. "I know them both, and I have no doubt we shall meet them where we are going. It is whispered, but, mind, it is a monstrous secret, that Octavius is very fond of Paullina, and that it was at her instance the Triumvirate lately granted them the honour of the fasces. How ridiculous! just as if they were so many magistrates. Look up this next street, you will get a fine view of the Capitol, and its gilt dome rising over the Tarpeian Rock. Is it not grand? What a dreadful bawling that sailor makes with his painted shipwreck slung about his neck, and his doleful ballad! Half these fellows are impostors. Drive, faster, coachman, faster, we shall be too late: but, stop first, stop a little. Look, my Hebrew beauty, did you ever see so handsome a man! It is Flavius Drusus, the Colonel of the Campanian Cavalry.—Good morning, Colonel, you have got a new horse, I see. What a spirited creature!"



While chatting with her handsome and splendidly accoutred friend, Maia seemed entirely to forget that they were likely to be too late; but he at length took his leave, the carriage again moved on, and in a short time they arrived at the house of Antony, now honoured with visitants of a diametrically opposite character to those who generally crowded the tumultuous morning levees of the Triumvir.—On being ushered into the drawing-room, Zillah found Octavia engaged in conversation with some of her friends, standing beside a lofty candelabrum, on which her arm was leaning, and occasionally passing from one hand to the other a ball of amber, which it was the fashion of the day to carry, because its refrigerating qualities kept the palm always cool. Her long stole, bordered with gold and purple tissue, and supported by female slaves, was left open in front to display the stomacher, resplendent with jewels; while a mantle of light fabric falling in graceful folds from the

clasp of her shoulder, was gathered up at its other extremity, and thrown across her wrist. She received her visitant with the most courteous and affable suavity, blended with that dignity and decorum which might have become a Roman matron in the proudest days of the Republic ; and Zillah, while she marked the beauty of her person, the sweetness of her voice, and the majestic elegance of her demeanour, was utterly at a loss to account for the infatuation of the husband who could alienate his affections from such a woman. Octavia, after having conversed with her for a short time, and invited her to her future levees, so long as she remained in Rome, added, “ You will, I hope, afford me the pleasure of meeting you to-morrow at the theatre, when Antony proposes to treat the people with a show of wild beasts.—Of how many does your party consist ?”

“ We are only three,” said Zillah, who was about to add that the Hebrews indulged not in

such spectacles ; but while she was considering how to state her objection, so as to avoid giving offence, Octavia took three ivory tickets from a little box, slipped them into her hand, and went forward to receive some other visitant. Maia immediately recovered possession of her *protégée*, whom she seemed determined to set off, as she had already playfully told her, against Antony's rhinoceros. Notwithstanding the high rank and character of the visitants, they had not been quite able to suppress a titter, or a buzz, at Zillah's costume, utterly opposed as it was to every thing classical or orthodox in fashion ; and the words, " Barbarian ! Beautiful Jewess ! Stately creature !" were whispered to one another while she had been conversing with Octavia. A slight mistake committed by Zillah, in her ignorance of Roman customs, converted the titter into an undisguised laugh. With a look and faint cry of terror, she had started

back on beholding a live snake writhing itself about in the bosom of one of the party, until informed by Maia that it was a harmless little tame serpent, which many ladies thus carried on account of the refreshing coolness it imparted to the skin. The female in question took out the twisting reptile, called it her pet, her grig, her dear little Angilla, kissed it tenderly, and returned it to its nest. "Now, come and sit upon this sofa," said Maia, after having paraded her friend round the circle; "and I will tell you who the people are as they pass us. Ah! you are looking at those two fine boys—are they not noble children? One of them is Octavia's, by her first husband, Marcellus; the other is Antony's, by his former wife, Fulvia; and it is impossible to say which of them she loves the best. Yonder, in white robes, are the two Vestals who passed us in the street. I told you they were coming here. Have a care, sirrah!"

she continued, addressing a slave, who was sprinkling the apartment with perfumed water; “ this amaranth mantle of mine is too precious to be stained.—Ah ! my dear Poppæa ! I knew you were coming, by the delightful odour of your essences. Spare me a few drops of your cinnamon extract.—That fine tall figure is Hortensia—the celebrated Hortensia who, when the Triumvirs would have pillaged the Roman ladies of half their fortunes, rated them soundly ; and, in conjunction with her friend Octavia, compelled them to reduce their claim.—And yonder is Marciana. Ah ! I would lay a wager that she has been meeting Lepidus in some party, for I know the mystic meaning of those flowers in her hair.—O dii et domini ! let us get out of the way of old Ælia Pompeia, with her painted and patched cheeks, her scraggy fingers washed in asses’ milk, and her head like the tower of Cybele. She will talk us to death. When once she begins, you may as well ask the river

Tiber to stop as her tongue. I hate such chatterboxes."

Zillah had no particular affection for them, and she was therefore far from displeased when her companion, having gone the round of the whole company, and exhausted her materials rather than her volubility, observed that it was getting stupid, and proposed that they should take their departure, and drive back to the lodgings.

## CHAPTER IX.

“No, my child, never, never !” said the Sagan, on the following morning, when Zillah showed him the tickets with which she had been presented ; “it is contrary to my principles, at variance with every Hebrew feeling, that I should be a witness of this cruel sport ; and we must return these tickets to the virtuous Octavia, with a proper explanation of our motives for declining them.”

“Truly, my dear father, it was not my purpose to have accepted them in the first instance, and I am delighted that you have decided on not going. I was confused at the moment, for the



fair gashed face of the Gladiator, whose tragical fate we witnessed, rose up before me, and I shuddered as the cold ivory was slipped into my hand, even as if it had been a naked sword."

"Were this a gladiatorial fight," said Gabriel, "I would never counsel your acceptance of Octavia's invitation; but I have made particular enquiry upon the subject: it is a mere combat of wild beasts, and we are no where forbidden by our law to be present at such exhibitions."

"Not by its letter, perhaps, Gabriel, but every where by its spirit, which I deem of weightier import, whatever the Pharisees may hold to the contrary. We have strange casuists among us: men who scruple not to violate the injunctions of the whole Decalogue, and yet affect a horror at pronouncing the great Tetragrammaton name of Jehovah, for which they will ever substitute the word Adonai. Not forbidden, Gabriel! Humanity to animals is one of the most marked and distinguishing characteristics of the Mosaic

dispensation; and one which, when I consider the darkness and barbarism of the age wherein the law was given, is to me a sure proof of its Divine origin."

"Far be it from a Hebrew to commit any active inhumanity upon animals, but here we shall be mere passive spectators," said Gabriel; who was not only extremely anxious to see the show, but who really believed, that any refusal to accept the invitation might be construed into an insult, and have a most injurious effect upon the pending negotiations.

"Booshoh he! for shame! this is an unworthy subterfuge. Has not Moses commanded us, if we see a beast tottering or lying under the weight of his burthen, not to remain passive spectators, but to help him up, and to continue our exertions until the owner himself considers him past relief? Is it not forbidden to mutilate any animal, or to muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn? Are we not enjoined to

extend to all our cattle the grateful repose of the Sabbath, and to give to the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field, the benefits of the Sabbatical and jubilee years, by suffering them to feed unmolested upon the spontaneous produce of the earth? Nay, does not our lawgiver inculcate even a sentimental humanity, commanding us to avoid the very show and semblance of cruelty, when he enacts that no cow, ewe, or goat, shall be killed on the same day with its young; that the kid shall not be seethed in its mother's milk; that no man finding a nest shall take the dam with the young, but suffer her to escape? Think you that God, who made both man and beast, shall remember one and forget the other? Shall I not spare Nineveh, saith the Lord, wherein there are a hundred and twenty thousand infants, and much cattle? Thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast, saith David in the thirty-sixth Psalm:—But enough, enough; you are a reader of the law,

Gabriel, and must have learned from a hundred passages such as these, that it becomes not a Hebrew to be present at this cruel sport of the pagans."

"Not if they were domestic animals, such as you have mentioned, which being given to man as his servants, or for his support, may be considered as entitled to his protection; but these are wild beasts, misanthropes by their nature, and such as man, therefore, is justified in destroying. Look at this rude figure of a rhinoceros engraven upon our tickets. Saw you ever such a monster? Would you make a pact of amity with a tremendous savage like this? and were you so disposed, think you that he would turn his horn into a plough-share, and give you his paw to bind the bargain? Not till the golden age of Isaiah shall arrive, when it shall be legal murder to kill an ox; when the weaned child shall harmlessly smooth down the comb of the cockatrice, lay its hand over

the hole of the asp, make a plaything of the adder, kiss the poisoned lips of the basilisk, and fan itself to sleep with the dragon's wings."

"Raca!" ejaculated the Sagan, "the monster is shaped like the unclean, the unutterable animal of abomination; and, lo!" he continued, casting the ticket indignantly from him, "what words are inscribed above it? 'At the Theatre of Pompey,'—a name that all good Hebrews should abhor. Pompey, the conqueror of Jerusalem, but only such because we piously preferred subjugation to an infraction of the Sabbath. Pompey, the impious violator even of our coins, which, from the times of Moses to those of Judas Maccabæus, had never borne the impress of any man, animal, or living creature, until he dared to stamp the figure of a captive female standing under a palm-tree, with the legend "Judæa Devicta," and to circulate this Roman insult throughout Palestine. The curse of Canaan upon his memory! and may

I never set foot in any of his Pagan buildings!"

"It is too late now, Rab Malachi, to form that wish; for the house in which Antony resides was built by Pompey. I admit all that you have urged; I attempt not to vindicate these cruel games; but I still think, that your duty to Antigonus and to Jerusalem forbids you to run the risk of offending Antony, and, perhaps, of frustrating the whole object of our mission, by refusing an invitation so graciously given by Octavia, and one which she doubtless considers to have been accepted. Whether we go or not, this exhibition will take place; and if, by our presence, we can advance the interests of the Holy City, and the chosen people, it must surely be more acceptable to God that we should do so, than that we should fastidiously consult our own feelings by remaining at home. The safety of Jerusalem is the primary law, to which all others should be made subsidiary.

Besides, the barbarity is here committed by the Pagans; the benefit of our going will accrue to the Hebrews; and in this point of view, the greater our personal repugnance to such spectacles, the greater will be our merit in sacrificing our feelings to a sense of duty. Many a pious Hebrew has been driven by stress of weather, and against his will, into a Pagan port; but there was no crime in it, for the winds that forced him thither came from Heaven; and thus there can be no offence in your visiting the theatre, since the motives that impel you into it, come alike from Heaven, springing, as they do, from a regard for God's Holy City and for the interests of His chosen people."

The latter part of the argument seemed to have some influence upon the Sagan, who shut his eyes, and swayed backward and forward, as was his wont whenever he was balancing any case in his mind. At this juncture, Pyttalus made his appearance; and had no sooner learned



from Gabriel the objections that had been started, than he most earnestly exhorted the Sagan to dismiss all such squeamish and frivolous excuses from his thoughts ; declaring, that to decline the invitation at this late hour, and after it had been accepted, would be construed into an insult, and, with a man so hasty and choleric as his noble patron, would infallibly lead to an instant rupture of the negotiation. “ This is no ordinary amphitheatrical show,” said the Greek ; “ far from it. It is not so much a contest between an elephant and a rhinoceros, as between Antony and Octavius. Both are, at this moment, contending candidates for public favour ; and each has been lately mustering his forces, and his friends, at the Circus. This is Antony’s exhibition ; he has invited his rival, as a matter of course ; the plebeians will go as usual, but his own particular partisans are all numbered and enrolled ; the acceptance of tickets has been considered

tantamount to an espousal of his cause; and were you, under these circumstances, to show him so pointed a slight as to return them, there would unquestionably be an end of your embassy, and you would do well to leave Rome without delay, since Antony, though a warm friend, is somewhat unscrupulous and remorseless as an enemy."

"And what sort of a reception should we meet from Antigonus, and our fellow-countrymen," enquired Gabriel, "if, to such a mere punctilio, we were to sacrifice the great object of our embassy?"

"I yield, though I am not convinced," said the Sagan; "this must be added to the many violations of the law which necessity has imposed upon me since I left the Holy City; and for which a due expiation must be made when I once more set foot within the Temple."

"I will be your scape-goat for the whole, Rab Malachi; for that which has been com-

mitted in a good cause, and with an honest conscience, can never entail any evil consequence."

"I, at least, may be allowed to absent myself from the theatre," said Zillah.

"*Dii prohibeant!* all the gods of the Pantheon forbid it!" cried Maia, who just then entered the room. "Octavia has specially charged me to call and take you all in my carriage, by which means I shall secure a seat in the Ambassador's lodge, which is the best in the whole house. Not go, indeed!—why, there's a rhinoceros! an animal which no one has ever seen; and half the girls in Rome would give all they are worth to be in our place. Many a heart, which has been proof against all the darts of Cupid, has been unable to resist a ticket to the privileged seats. Quick, therefore, quick! on with your things; be ready at the appointed hour, when I will call for you again: but I must run away now, for that odious milliner has not sent home my Indian mantle with

gold tassels ; and I must call for my studded girdle—and my—Oh ! how do you like my new sandals, and my Egyptian amaranths ? La ! I have not a moment to lose. Adieu ! till I return.”

“ There is no help for us, my child,” said the Sagan, when Maia had quitted the apartment ; “ we must submit to circumstances, and witness this Pagan abomination, however repugnant it may be to Hebrew notions. Daniel came uninjured out of the lions’ den ; the young princes of Judah out of the Chaldean furnace ; Judith out of the camp of Holofernes ; and even so may we return from this blood-stained shambles of the heathen, without spot or contamination.”

Perhaps the Sagan and Zillah were the only two individuals in Rome who did not wear light and gladsome hearts on this jocund morning, which was a holiday, a triumph, a season of joy and jubilee, for the whole population ; those who were not going to the theatre, pour-

ing forth from every quarter to witness the stately processions and gay cavalcades of their more fortunate fellow-townsmen. Upon this occasion, the people of rank exhibited the full pomp of their officers, servants, and slaves; the middling classes were attired in their richest habiliments; even the plebeians had mostly discarded their brown tunics, and appeared in white garments. Some had sent overnight, or at the dawn of day, to secure their places, and the Locarii, whose office answered to that of our box-keepers, would infallibly have lost their temper, from the importunity of the numerous applicants, had they not, in most instances, been mollified by a *douceur*. From the multitudes with which the streets were thronged, and the number of carriages and processions, the progress of our party was necessarily slow; but they at length reached the vast and lofty building, constructed of massy stones, and pierced round its base with arcades, each of which was

numbered and appropriated to a particular district of the city: an arrangement by which all confusion was prevented, notwithstanding the living stream that kept pouring, for many hours, into every aperture. On passing through these arches, the Hebrews entered a succession of passages, not inappropriately termed The Labyrinth, although the light of lamps, and the directions written upon the walls, afforded a clue to its mazes. Maia pointed out to them, as they advanced, the stairs that led down to the Libitinerian Gate, through which the corpses of the gladiators were always dragged, when they were killed in the arena; as well as the entrance to the apartment in which their bodies were stripped: the levity and nonchalance of her tone, as she furnished this information, forming a characteristic contrast to the shudder with which Zillah heard it. As the seats set apart for the ambassadors were in the lowest row, they had a very little way to

climb, and after a short progress through these narrow and rather gloomy passages, they emerged into the open unroofed area of the stupendous pile. Its vastness and magnificence, together with the nation within its walls, forming, as it were, mountains of human heads, their eyes all sparkling with expectation, like a galaxy of stars, burst suddenly upon their sight, with a grandeur, a sublimity of effect, that was almost overpowering. For some time they could only gaze around them in rapt admiration and amazement, not unmixed with awe ; and it was not until this first thrill of entrancement had passed away, that they could attend to the detail of the mighty spectacle before them.

The large statue of the Victorious Venus, as well as the sacred columns, obelisks, and altars, which usually stood ranged along the centre of the arena, had been all removed, not only to afford a better view to the spectators, but in the



apprehension that animals of so stupendous a size as those now about to be exhibited, might overturn or damage them; so that the vast area, which was covered with yellow sand, allowed an uninterrupted view in every direction. Around the base were the vaulted entrances to the numerous dens wherein the wild beasts were confined, having between them a range of grated crypts, into which the rabble were allowed to crowd, and obtain a peep at the arena, just level with their heads.\* The lower ranges of seats, in which the foreign Ambassadors, the dignitaries, and most distinguished personages were placed, were defended by a broad trench, filled

\* This post, though perfectly well secured against the ferocious quadrupeds, did not always afford protection against biped savages; for Caligula, being told that all the condemned malefactors had been used up at one of these Circensian games, sent his guards to seize a dozen or two of the fellows behind the grating, and throw them to the wild beasts; an imperial joke, which was, no doubt, highly applauded by his courtiers.

with water, and surmounted by an iron railing, as well as by nets, spikes, and gilt palisades, affixed to rotatory staves, to prevent the grappling and climbing of the wild beasts. In these first rows, which were considered the most honourable, sate, in a separate tribunal, the whole sisterhood of the Vestals, in their white robes of state; and in a parallel line with them, sweeping round the vast circle, were seen the chief priests, the Flamens and Augurs, the Consuls, Prætors, and Ædiles, the Senators, and all the Magistrates of rank, their seats being of Parian or African marble, covered with rich cushions; though some, to whom the honour of the Bissellium, or the curule-chair, had been decreed by the people, had decorated them with ivory and silver. Above these were the circles for the Knights; and then came the great mass of the spectators, divided, for their more commodious arrangement, into masses of a wedge-like shape, and lining the walls with innumerable heads up

to the dizzy top of the building. Perfumes were diffused through the theatre by means of pipes, which scattered odoriferous showers in various directions; in addition to which, most of the better class, and many of the plebeians, had provided themselves with flowers and nosegays. Although neither Antony nor Octavius had yet arrived, the building was nearly filled when our Hebrew visitants entered it. Every where the gallants were busily paying their devoirs to their fair favourites, by taking care that they should have an uninterrupted view in front, and that none who sate behind them should offer them any molestation ; while the parasites were not less actively employed in doing interested homage to the rich and the great, by tendering a broad-brimmed hat, or a canopy, to such as were exposed to the rays of the sun ; finding seats for those who had come late ; negotiating an exchange with the discontented ; or arranging the cushions of those whose age and infirmi-

ties rendered it not improbable, that an early legacy might reward such well-timed services. There was nothing to interrupt these little exhibitions of gallantry or selfishness ; nothing to check the buzz of countless tongues, which rustled around the building, like the leaves of a forest played upon by a gentle wind,—for the arena was now unoccupied. It had afforded, however, ample matter of conversation to the commonalty, for whose amusement, and to beguile the tedious hours which they were compelled to wait, a bear and a wolf, tied together, had been turned out against a wild boar, who killed them both ; while a bull had been hoisted up from the arena to the very top of the theatre, to represent Hercules carried up to Heaven,—a burlesque sort of parody, which had been received with unbounded laughter and applause. These exhibitions, which took place at an early hour of the morning, were merely intended for the recreation of the plebeians ; it

was even considered vulgar to be present at them. The great attraction of the day was the expected combat between the elephant and rhinoceros, to be followed by a general engagement of lions, tigers, bears, wolves, and crocodiles, which was not to commence until a signal should be given by Antony, at whose expense the whole menagerie had been collected.

“However we may dislike the motive of their assemblage,” said Zillah to her father, “is it not a grand sight, thus to behold all the various orders of the state, and such an immense mass of its population, heaped up, one above another, in this gigantic pile, as if they were climbing to the sky? I cannot see myself thus surrounded with fellow-creatures, I cannot approach so near to the pulsation of myriads of throbbing hearts, and not feel my own thrill with sympathy.”

“Mine, my child, participates not in any such imbecility. Nay, I cannot look at these

idolaters, these Romans, as a people, without hatred and aversion, deeming them, as I do, the curse and torment of the whole world. Is it not enough, that, in their insatiable thirst of blood, they carry war and all its horrors into the uttermost bounds of the earth, but must they wage perpetual hostilities with the animal as well as the human creation? Will nothing but the unceasing tearing of flesh and spilling of gore satisfy these savages in their ravenings after agony and death? Earth and ocean, man and beast, are alike worried and outraged by these scourges of the universe. Raca! may they be all exterminated, or enslaved like the accursed Canaanites!"

"Look! look!" exclaimed Maia; who during the colloquy had been deeply engaged in conversation with a friend; "see how riotously those schoolboys are clambering up to their lofty places, as if they were mad with joy. By the Roscian law, they are now entitled to a

wedge, and their pedagogues to another. Oh ! here they come, as slow and stately, as starch, stiff, and solemn, as if they were not in their hearts quite as much delighted as their pupils. And now, if you want a contrast to these grave prigs, cast your eyes lower down, upon those flaunting females in yellow dresses, laughing so loud, showing their white teeth, and making such a display of their sparkling jewels."

"One of them has the prettiest carcanet of golden chrysolites that I have seen since I left Palestine," said Gabriel, who instantly became all ears and eyes at the mention of jewels; "the second displays bracelets of rare violet jacinth ; and the third, so covered with pearls—aha ! surely I should know her face : Is it not the little, lisping, fair-haired Amazonian, whom we encountered in the Aricinian forest. Who are they ? who are they ?"

"They are Origo, Arbuscula, and Cytheris—though I believe the latter now calls herself



Volumnia—three celebrated ladies, for the interest of whose reputation it may be well that I decline mentioning their profession. What a crowd of brazen-faced young men are fluttering around them ! Alecto and Nemesis ! what do I see ? was there ever such intolerable assurance ! There is Flavius Drusus stopping to talk to one of them ! The low wretch ! Not that I care for him,—and, indeed, I will never speak to him again as long as I live.” The offended beauty, reddening with anger, immediately began pointing out to Zillah’s notice several conspicuous characters in another part of the house, giving their history with prodigious volubility, and affecting a perfect nonchalance as to the proceedings of the Colonel, though occasional furtive peeps towards the seat of the three Cyprians betrayed that her thoughts and her tongue were occupied upon different subjects. Zillah, tired of listening to scandalous anecdotes of people whom she had

never seen before, and would probably never behold again, had insensibly fixed her attention upon a youth in front of her, who had attracted her notice by regarding her from time to time with a pointed, and, as it appeared to her, with an admiring look. There was nothing offensive, however, in its expression. It was not the rude stare with which she had sometimes been annoyed—not the gluttonous eye that seems as if it would devour the charms over which it gloats—no, it was one that was timid and respectful in its glances; one that was modestly bent down to the ground if it encountered Zillah's, and yet which seemed to be utterly unable to avoid stealing a fresh glance, only to betray a deeper embarrassment when it was detected. Sympathizing with the confused agitation she occasioned, Zillah looked another way, but somehow or other her eyes unconsciously wandered back in the same direction, until, by that secret and inexplicable communion,

thus silently carried on, the parties felt that they were objects of interest and attention to each other, and yet both would have been utterly at a loss to explain the origin and nature of their sensations.

The young Roman was handsome, but his beauty emanated rather from the noble and intellectual air of his head, and the amiable yet melancholy expression of his countenance, than from the regularity of his features. Young as he was, his cheeks had lost their bloom, and his face was slightly tanned by the sun, but his uncovered throat showed fairer and more graceful than the statuary's marble. His demeanour was that of a pensive, abstracted man; for he sometimes turned his back to the arena, sometimes gazed upwards to the sky, and seemed to take very little interest in the proceedings around him, except when he could unobservedly fix upon Zillah his dark eyes full of tenderness and thought.

From these abashed and yet renewed glances, Zillah, as we have stated, looked blushing away, and was saluting Octavia, whom she had recognized at a little distance, surrounded by a party of ladies, when Maia, laying her hand upon her arm, exclaimed, with an aspect of some apprehension, " Surely we are about to have a terrible storm ; the theatre is quite dark ; I can no longer distinguish faces at a little distance."

Zillah now, for the first time, observed that the sun no longer shone upon the arena as before ; that dark clouds were sweeping across the sky ; and that the whole theatre was involved in a deep lurid gloom. As every thing portended a sharp and sudden tempest, the enormous veil, or awning, which was occasionally extended over a great part of the aperture at the top of the theatre, as a shade from the sun, was now stretched forward to its utmost reach, to protect the spectators from the expected

deluge of rain, involving the lower parts of the area in such a dense obscurity, that the people looked like dim rows of shadows, while their voices came up confusedly out of the darkness with an ominous and unnatural sound, as if it were the gibbering of so many unseen spectres. The effect of this sudden eslipse was, perhaps, increased by its contrast with the vivid stream of sunshine which had so recently poured down into the arena ; and yet instead of diminishing, as the eye became habituated to it, the gloom became momentarily deeper and deeper.

At this juncture Antony, followed by a numerous company of his partisans and retainers, entered the theatre. Such was the obscurity, that he might not perhaps have been recognized, had not a military band, stationed for the purpose, struck up with their trumpets, cymbals, and clarions, a favourite martial tune, called Antony's March, at which signal the whole multitude simultaneously rose from their

seats, the rustling of their garments emitting a sound like the rushing of mighty waters, and the movement of their bodies occasioning a sensible agitation in the air. Loud and almost deafening applauses followed; for he who provided the Romans with their favourite shows was sure of being popular; and the clamour had not yet subsided, when a terrific flash of lightning suddenly flooded the whole vast area with a resplendent blaze, the gloom instantly plunged into it again blacker than ever, and a stunning burst of thunder threatened to split in pieces the solid walls of the theatre, or shake them down upon the heads of the spectators.

The assembled people, whose terrors were aggravated by superstition, instantly resumed their seats, aghast with dismay, and awed into a profound silence; but the numerous wild beasts in the dens below, startled by the previous shouts of the populace, and the astounding

peal from heaven, answered the dread challenge with a burst of savage fury ; the roar of lions, tigers, and bears, the baying of wolves, the fierce snorting of wild boars, the hollow yell of the rhinoceros, and the sharp, shrill, piercing cry of the elephant, filling the vast concave of the walls with such commingled and appalling echoes, that many thought the monsters were breaking from their prison, and mustering their forces for a desperate and deadly plunge amid the spectators. Dauntless, indeed, must that man have been who could reflect without emotion that he was sitting between two perils of no ordinary nature,—that whole forests of wild beasts were ramping and ravening beneath him, and that the skies above were vomiting forth fire amid tremendous concussions that seemed to rock the very earth.

“ We are in the temple of Dagon, my child,” said the Sagan, “ and if its battlements fall down before the thunder of the Lord, as did



the idolatrous image before the ark at Ashdod ; or if we are buried, like Samson, under the walls of the Philistines ; it is our own act, our own crime, and we shall have merited our fate. Come closer to me, nearer still ; if the judgment is at length about to descend upon the Pagans, we cannot expect to be spared, Hebrews though we be, but we will at least perish together."

" Be not thus dismayed, my dear father ; the heaviness of the storm seems passed ; and see, the gloom is already less murky than it was."

A momentary intermission had indeed occurred ; during which interval Octavius, accompanied by a troop of friends, entered the theatre, on the opposite side to that where Antony had seated himself, and advanced towards the front rows. Courageous as he had proved himself on various occasions, he had an invincible, a superstitious, morbid horror of lightning ;

and another dazzling flash happening to blaze through the building when he had proceeded about half-way, he suddenly turned round, not without visible manifestations of alarm, and hurried back to the arched passage from which he had emerged. This retreat occasioned a strong sensation among the spectators ; it was considered so favourable an augury for Antony, that, notwithstanding the continued violence of the tempest, a buzz of exultation from his partisans murmured hollowly around the building. The flashes, though less blinding, now became more frequent, and as they illuminated the peopled area with a momentary shiver of brilliance, Zillah beheld myriad faces starting out of the dim void, all animated with deep emotion, and their eyes sparkling, as if they were on fire ; when the shroud of gloom again fell suddenly over them, and she saw nothing but an indistinct mass, closing around her on all sides, like the narrow horizon of a moon-

less night. It seemed as if a whole people leaped into light and life, only to be extinguished again in an instant, to the funeral dirge of a peal of thunder. A deluge of rain now pouring into that portion of the building which was unprotected by the awning, cloaks, hats, and canopies of all sorts were put in busy requisition—the flashes became gradually less vivid and frequent—the light slowly revisited the benighted area—the thunder rolled muttering away into the distance—the roaring of the wild beasts subsided into an occasional angry growl or short snarl—the furious pattering of the big splashing rain dwindled into an inaudible shower—the clouds broke away—the bright blue sky again became visible—the sun came forth, rejoicing in his recovered might, and his bright beams darting through the opening of the awning, fell once more upon the glistening yellow sands of the arena.

While the storm was thus passing away,

Octavius had re-entered, and seated himself, with his band of friends, in the places assigned to them. His re-appearance was not greeted by any acclamations, either because the people, however terrified they might be themselves, were indignant at the pusillanimity he had displayed, or because the greater portion of them were in the interests of Antony ; or, perhaps, because their faculties were too much absorbed by the elemental strife to allow their party feelings to display themselves with their customary vivacity. Many, indeed, of the older and more thoughtful citizens, saw in this tremendous collision of the clouds a manifest prefiguration of that clashing between Antony and Octavius which had been long anticipated ; which could only be accomplished amid the thunder and lightning of war and steel ; and which, whenever it occurred, would deluge the Roman soil with blood instead of rain. Such considerations, and the undissipated remains of the awe that had

oppressed the minds of the spectators, threw a comparative air of seriousness over the assemblage, which was not entirely dispersed until the commencement of the sports.

No such depression, however, clouded the mind of the gay and volatile Maia. The returning sunshine had chased away all her alarms, and she was again busily employed in chattering to Zillah. “Did you ever hear any thing so insolent? Old Sibylla has just been whispering me, that when Antony and his noisy friends made their appearance, it exactly reminded her of the manner in which Catiline, with his bravoës and bullies, used to come hectoring into the theatre! Only see how full it has become—what numbers of people have been shut out of their wedge—the passages are all crammed—the Colonel, I see, has lost his place—it serves him quite right—what a fine sousing they have had on the other side!—look, look! did you ever see any thing so beautiful?”

The woollen awning, stretching out from the top of the building, was dyed in broad streaks of red, iron-colour, and yellow, and as the sun fell upon this expanse, undulated at the same time by the wind, it threw all its varicoloured hues upon the people beneath, lighting up their faces with different tints, and waving its prismatic line up and down, like the reflection of a rainbow seen in the heaving waters; or rather, perhaps, from its being so thickly studded with eyes, like the continuous tail of a peacock, fanning to and fro. Such was the object to which Zillah's attention had been directed; but it did not long occupy the thoughts or the tongue of her loquacious companion. "What a bad omen it was for Antony," she exclaimed, "to enter just over the Libitinerian Gate; but his genius triumphed over that of his rival notwithstanding. Did you observe how little Octavius sneaked away from the thunder? What a poltroon!—You do not think him short?

Oh! that is because he wears thick soles of cork, and high-heeled shoes.—Yes, I admit that his eyes are sparkling, but he is not so handsome as Antony, though he is so much younger.—I wonder when the rhinoceros will appear. Pompey was the first that exhibited elephants. We had a capital show last year; a hundred and fifty tigers were killed, five crocodiles, and a hippopotamus. Wasn't it ridiculous?—Ah! there's Mæcenas, and Fonteijs by his side; and yonder gay spark is young Dolabella; and that old woman with the palsied head, covered with diamonds, is Rufilla; and the pretty girl—Hark! there's the signal! Now then, now! The sports are going to begin at last."

A buzz and flutter of expectation ran through the vast assemblage, as if they had been all suddenly electrified: they who were standing sate down; the seated drew themselves up more erect: not an eye was now wandering around



the house ; all were bent eagerly on the arena ; even the youth, whose stolen glances Zillah had remarked, now turned his looks in the same direction as the others. Owing to the stupendous size of the elephant, and the impossibility of raising the arch of the doorway, which was not high enough to allow his exit, they had been obliged to lower the ground of the den ; so that the animal had a considerable ascent to make before he could present himself on the arena. As he walked leisurely up the slope, it appeared to those opposite as if some monstrous apparition were heaving itself up out of the earth ; and when, by gaining the level, his gigantic bulk became distinctly visible, a shout of admiration and surprise burst from the delighted spectators. Maia informed Zillah that a considerable quantity of mulberry-wine had been given to him, in order to render him more fierce and pugnacious ; but if such were the fact, it appeared to have failed of its effect, for nothing

could be more sober, calm, and collected than his deportment. Gently bowing his head up and down, he walked slowly round the arena, with a step as majestic as if he were still trampling the Asiatic forest, of which he was once the undisputed monarch ; or as if, divining the wishes of the multitude, he condescended to gratify them by showing himself off to the best advantage. Neither the shouts, nor the encircling spikes and palisades, nor the vast multitude, accustomed as he must have been to consider man as his enemy, affected him in the smallest degree ; or, if they moved him at all, he disdained to betray his emotion. Nay, so perfect was his contemptuous unconcern, that he actually stood still for a minute, winked his little eyes, and opened the deep cavern of his tongueless mouth in a long lazy gape—a piece of nonchalance that was received with a loud laugh by the mob ; when he again deliberately bowed his head, and resumed his march.

After he had thus made two stately circuits of the arena, it was thought fit that he should terminate his parade, and commence active service. The rhinoceros was accordingly turned out of his den, trotting forward with a dissonant yell that threatened a fierce and desperate attack upon whatever adversary he might encounter ; but he had no sooner caught sight of his opponent, than he stopped short, apparently awed by his stupendous magnitude, and surveyed him at first with irresolution, and presently with evident dismay. The elephant, too, halted, turned his head towards his antagonist, and eyeing him with a fixed attention, seemed to be calmly awaiting his decision, as if he himself neither sought hostilities, nor wished to decline them if challenged. When this mutual inspection had lasted two or three minutes, the fears of the rhinoceros prevailing over his ferocity, he slunk cowering away to the very edge of the arena, and the elephant, as if it were beneath his dig-

nity to interrupt his morning's walk by pursuing such a craven, continued his march with great composure. As he approached his recreant adversary in his rounds, the latter invariably bolted away to the opposite side, determined to avoid all collision; and thus they kept dodging about for some time, influencing one another's movements like the sun and moon, but without much more prospect of their ever coming into close contact.

Impatient at being thus defrauded of the entertainment they had anticipated, the people clamorously demanded that some of the gladiators, whose business it was to fight with animals, should be turned in, not to engage personally with the monsters, but, by plaguing and wounding them, to irritate them into a combat with one another. As it was judged probable that a third wild beast might accomplish this object more effectually than the gladiators, the largest and fiercest of the tigers was let loose.

Here was a belligerent whose pugnacity did not admit of a moment's doubt. With fire-flashing eyes he bounded into the centre of the arena, lifted up his paw in defiance, and, displaying his white fangs, as well as the crimson depths of his gorge, sent forth a roar that seemed to challenge all adversaries, brutal or human, to come forward to the attack, or prepare themselves for an instant onslaught from their new assailant. With a single glance of his eye he appeared to comprehend the real nature of his situation, and, as if resolved to make a desperate effort at escape, or to wreak a bloody revenge in the attempt, he rushed forward, bounded at a single leap upon the elephant's back, and clearing with another vault the trench, the nets, and the palisades, descended with his forefeet upon the stone parapet of the front seats, at only a few paces distance from the spot where Zillah and her friends were stationed. Fortunately for them, and for

those who surrounded them, the animal's hinder quarters had become entangled in the iron spikes; in the convulsive effort to get loose, it reared, fell backward upon them at full length, and there lay impaled, writhing and roaring, and utterly unable to extricate itself.

While the men nearest to the spot were calling aloud for javelins to dispatch the intruder, the elephant, whose back had been perhaps wounded by the tiger's claws, and whose rage was now effectually awakened, threw out his long proboscis, seized his prostrate assailant, and tearing away his body with a wrench that brought with it a portion of the spikes and palisades, dashed it with such violence to the ground, that the mangled animal uttered only a single groan, rolled over, and fell dead into the trench. Unable to wreak any farther revenge upon the carcase, the now infuriated elephant suddenly darted his trunk through the opening where the spikes had been torn away, and was preparing

to wind it round one of the bystanders, several of whom were leaning over the front seat, and looking down at the dead body in the trench, when Zillah, either guessing the animal's purpose from the direction of its eye, or perhaps instigated by the jeopardy of the youth who had been previously regarding her with such marked attention, and who was already within the grasp of his terrible assailant, suddenly snatched her father's staff, sprung the steel, and plunged it into the proboscis. It was instantly twitched back with a sharp cry, and in another second was darted out again towards Zillah, but she was providentially beyond its reach. The youth, whose life she had saved, well knowing the never-forgetting spirit of vengeance that belongs to this sagacious animal, now urged the instant departure of Zillah ; who, on her part, sick, shuddering, and terrified, implored her father to take her instantly home ; a request with which the Sagan, who was not less disgusted



than herself, immediately prepared to comply. "Come, my child," he exclaimed, "let us quit this Beth-Jeshimoth,—this house of desolation,—this Tophet,—this valley of shrieking!"

"My dear friend," said Maia, laying her hand upon Zillah's arm, "you cannot possibly think of going—the sports are just about to begin—there is not the smallest danger, now that two rows of seats have been left vacant where the palisades were broken—they have sent for some javelin-men to be stationed there; and besides, you will never be able to get out—you cannot make your way through the mob; and if you do, you will lose yourself for an hour or two in the labyrinth. Wait till it is all over, and I will accompany you."

"Stay not another instant!" exclaimed the youth, whose life Zillah had saved, and who was now standing by her side, pouring into her ear the most impassioned expressions of gratitude—"I will be your guide, and I pledge myself

to see you clear of the theatre in a quarter of an hour."

"We accept your offer, young man. Lead on !" said the Sagan ; and placing his daughter between himself and Gabriel, they followed their conductor, not without some difficulty, through the narrow crowded passages that intersected the rows of seats. Their guide knew many of those whom they encountered in their exit, and bespeaking their assistance in favour of a female who was indisposed, while he exerted himself to the utmost in clearing the way, they at length reached one of the principal vomitories, passed through the labyrinth, and found themselves once more in the street. The stranger accompanied them to their own door, where he renewed his acknowledgments in the liveliest and most fervent terms ; and having solicited and obtained permission to call on the morrow, that he might, in a more formal manner than his present agitation would allow, testify his sense of

the inappreciable service conferred upon him by Zillah's courage and presence of mind, he gazed upon her for a moment with a look of the deepest and most tender homage, kissed his hand to the party, and retired.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

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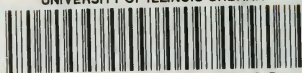








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